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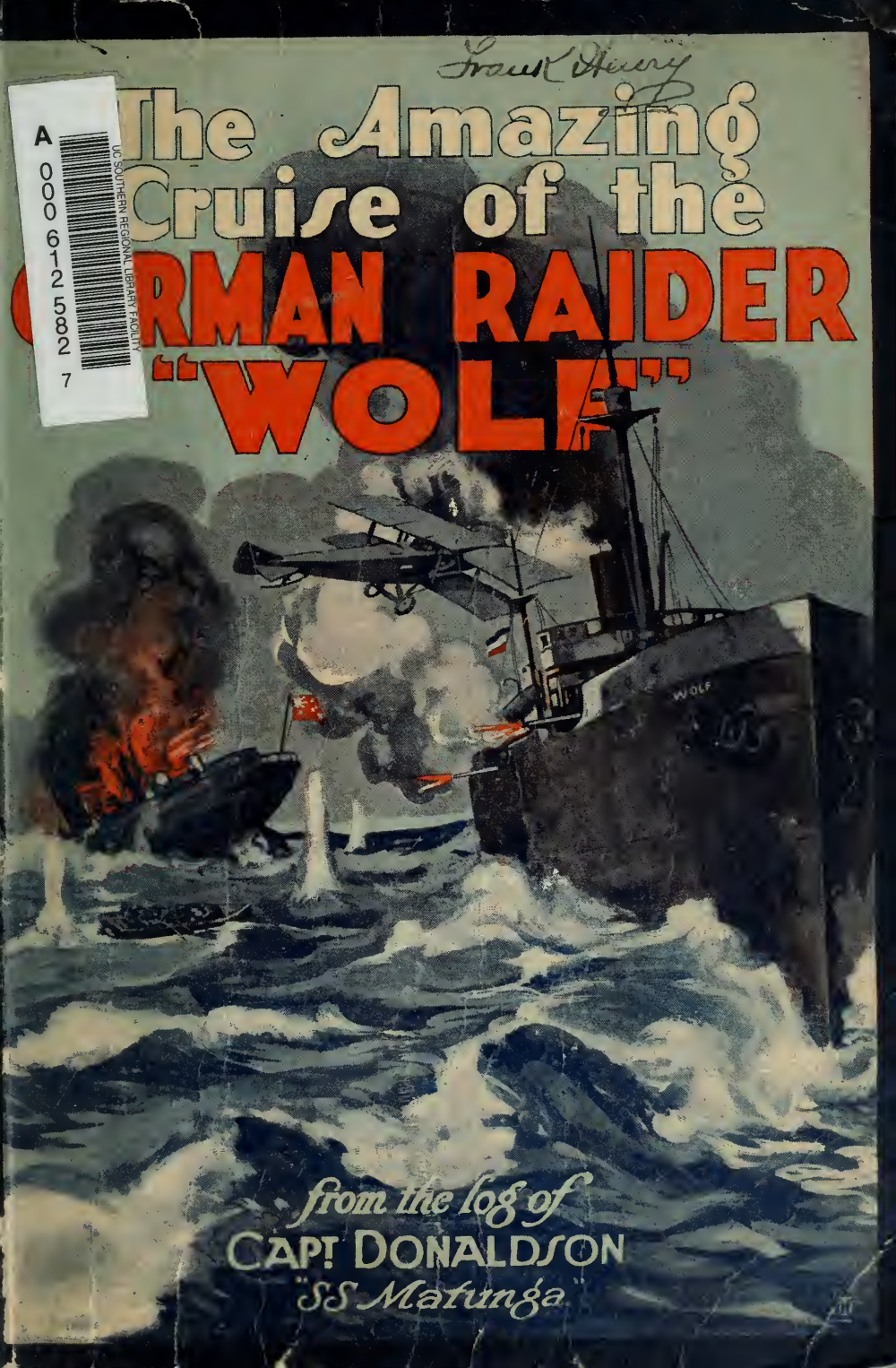
The Amazing Cruise of the RMAN RAIDER "WOLF"



from the log of
CAPT DONALDSON
"SS Matunga"

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This map shows the track taken by the German Raider from and back to Kiel. The black line indicates the outward track, arrows the direction; the dotted line, from Singapore, indicating the track taken on the return voyage. It records the approximate positions of the capture of shipping, the minefields sown by the "Wolf," and the several vessels which met disaster through striking them. This map gives a clear indication of how close the raider approached Australia and New Zealand, getting within a few hours' steam of Sydney.

The Amazing Cruise of the German Raider "Wolf."

FROM THE LOG OF

CAPTAIN DONALDSON

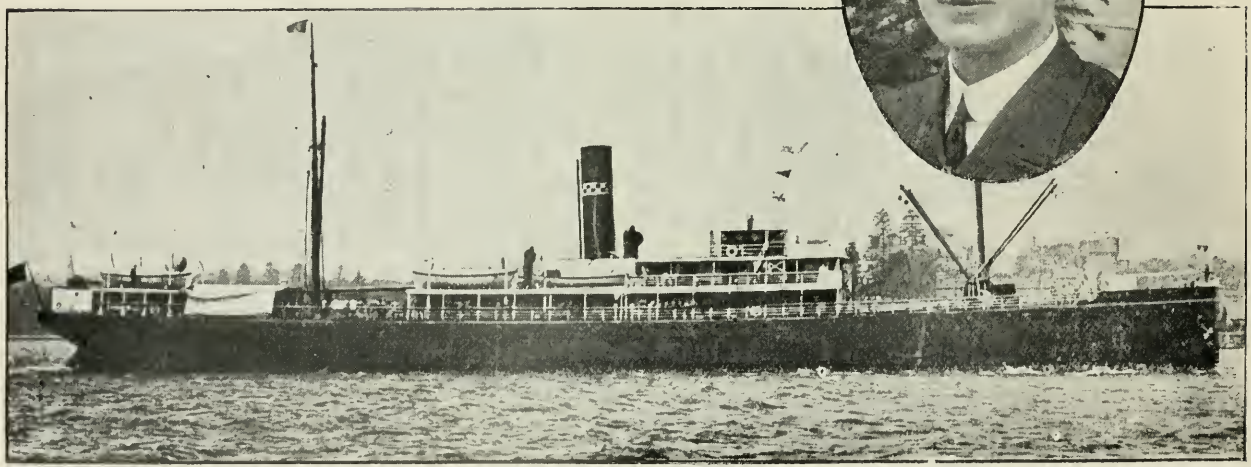
S.S. "MATUNGA."

PUBLISHERS

NEW CENTURY PRESS LTD.

431a KENT STREET, SYDNEY

S.s. "Matunga" as she lay in Sydney Harbour. She was a vessel of about 1,800 tons gross, and belonged to the well-known Burns, Philp Line trading to the Islands. Inset is a photo. of Captain A. Donaldson, who was in command when the "Matunga" was captured by the "Wolf."



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INTRODUCTION.

Nothing that occurred during the Great War so closely touched Australia as the operations of the Germain raider "Wolf." Though there were, during the progress of the war, particularly in the earlier stages, many rumours and alarms of enemy invasion, while many estimable citizens were able to furnish the straight tip about visitations of enemy squadrons, of battles, of the sinking of transports and capture of merchantmen, of the detection of alien enemy subjects using wireless plants in many inaccessible places, and there were those who actually saw enemy aeroplanes, yet we have no authoritive information of enemy activities in our home seas other than those of the cruiser "Emden," the "See Adler," and the "Wolf." Of the two former enemy vessels little need be said here, full accounts having appeared in many sources of public information, and indeed, so far as affecting Australia was concerned, their activities were short-lived.

The "Wolf," however, did disturb the peace of our home seas. Besides taking a considerable toll of our shipping by direct capture, evidenced by the cases of the "Matunga," "Wairuna," "Winslow," and other well-known boats, she laid several nests of "eggs" (mines) around the coast of Australia and New Zealand, some of which hatched and took a further toll of our local traders. Of these, the mishap of the steamer Cumberland is extremely interesting. This boat was one of the Federal Houlder Shire's latest liners of nearly 9000 tons, with a dead weight capacity of 15,000 tons, her length being 474ft., breadth 60ft., by depth 36ft., and she was powerfully equipped for cargo handling, carrying four steam turbines geared to two shafts. Leaving Sydney on her third trip on

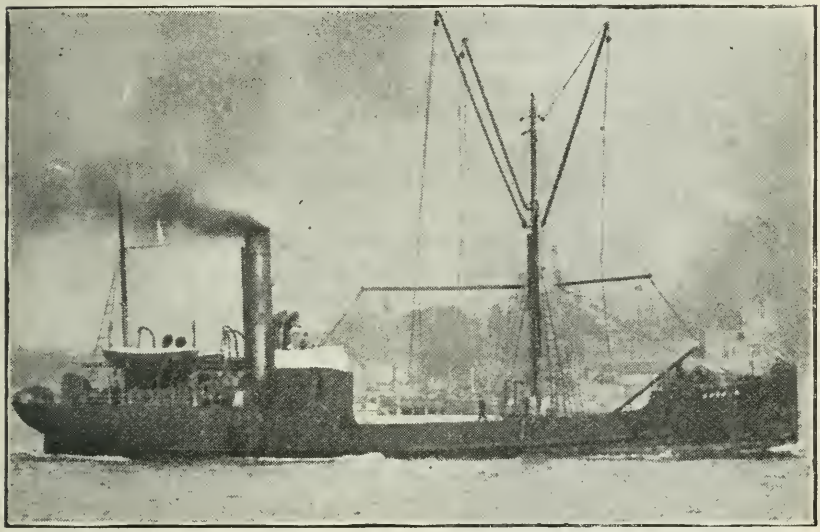
Thursday, July 6, 1917, for London via ports, with Captain McGibbon in charge, she got no further than Gabo Island, 238 miles from Sydney, when a violent explosion occurred in her No. 1 hold, which blew a great hole in her side. Wireless S.O.S. signals brought help, and at 6 a.m. next morning a ship hove in sight, and passing a line to the "Cumberland," started towing her towards shore, where the captain decided to beach her. This was successfully managed, and a good deal of her cargo salvaged. It was then decided to endeavour to patch the vessel sufficiently to enable her to be towed to Sydney for repairs, and this being done, the journey was started. Shortly afterwards, however, very heavy weather was met, the ship started to take in more water than was safe, and it was decided to abandon her. This was not done any too soon, for just afterwards she went to the bottom. The I.W.W. organisation in Australia were blamed for this mishap, it being currently believed that in stowing her cargo a time bomb had been secreted in her hold. It was, however, held later on at the inquest that the misadventure was due to a mine.

The Huddart Parker steamer "Wimmera" provides another instance. This time the mines were encountered in a vastly different position. The "Wimmera" left Auckland, N.Z., on June 26th, 1917, at 10 a.m., for Sydney. Proceeding up the north coast of New Zealand, she struck a mine in the vicinity of North Cape, and sunk in ten minutes. The ship's stern was shattered when the explosion occurred, and the lights failed immediately, making the work of escape exceedingly difficult. A number of the passengers and crew were lost, including the captain. Nothing was saved from this boat, all the mails she carried, including many bags for overseas ports, going to the bottom with the ship.

The big cargo carrier, "Port Kembla," of the Dominion Line, met her fate in a different locality altogether. On the 28th June, 1917, when the "Port Kembla" was about 25 miles off Cape Farewell, the northernmost point of South Island, N.Z., she struck a mine and went down with a total loss of a

most valuable cargo, estimated to be worth about £500,000. All the crew of the Port Kembla escaped, and they stated that during the night they heard the rattle of the machinery of the "Wolf," which they supposed to be laying mines.

And brief mention may be made of the loss of the sailing ship "Handa Isle," of which very meagre particulars are available.



The illfated collier "Undola," supposed to have struck one of the mines laid by the "Wolf." She was never heard of after she left Sydney on her last voyage.

And then, much later, we have the instance of the Sydney-owned collier, "Undola," which never reached her home port, and of whom neither tale nor tiding has to this day been heard, it being commonly conceded that she met her fate from one of these drifting mines.

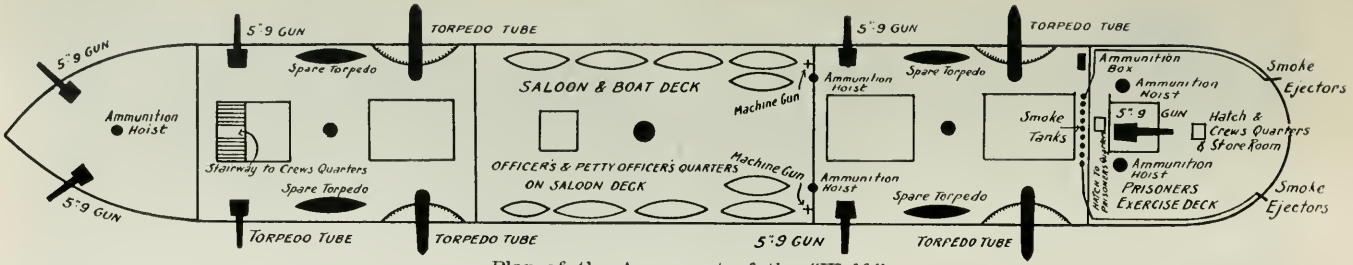
And even at this date it is by no means certain that all these mines have been located, there still exist possibilities of meeting trouble from this source. Indeed, although a large number of these "eggs" have been "broken" by the trawlers sent out to search for floating mines by the Australian Naval

Department, further evidence just as this book goes to press goes to show that we still have this menace with us.

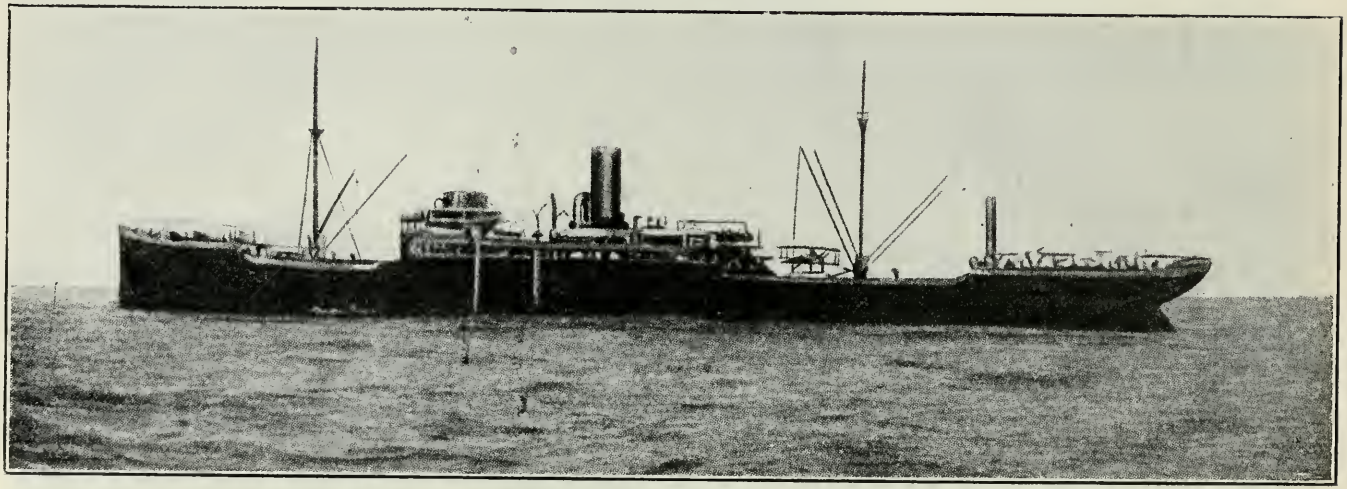
The following report from Newcastle (N.S.W.), dated May 23rd, 1919, nearly two years after the cruise of the "Wolf," is certainly convincing:—

> NEWCASTLE.—A picnic party on the beach on the northern side of Morna Point, about 20 miles from Newcastle, and fairly close to the entrance to Port Stephens, to-day came across an apparently unexploded floating mine, which had been washed up by the sea.
>
> According to reports from the scene of the discovery, the mine was intact, the horns being undamaged.
>
> Commander Fearnley, of the Newcastle Naval Station, states that, according to the informatin he has received, there is no doubt that the object is a mine. He will proceed to the scene to-morrow, with the intention of examining the mine and destroying it.

The amazing cruise of the "Wolf" has then an intense local interest to the people of Australia and New Zealand. Ships owned and trading with both countries were victims, officers and crews captured were men well known in every local port, with their families and relatives scattered throughout the cities and towns of the sister dominions, not to mention the cargoes, make the sum total, which accounts for this concentration of local interest. And this must be accentuated from the experiences of these men. They were, in common with people taken from boats flying other flags, cooped up in this ship for many months, a great part of the time below decks with hatches battened down, particularly at times when quick egress might have been vital to their very lives. For whenever an alarm of an enemy vessel was given, the prisoners were unceremoniously hustled below and battened down, and it might easily have happened almost at any time that an Allied cruiser dropped across the "Wolf," which would have



Plan of the Armament of the "Wolf."



The "Wolf," previously a freighter, 7000 tons gross burden, belonging to the Hansa Line of Bremen, and was named the "Wachtfels." Upon taking the more aggressive and hazardous occupation of raider the Germans re-named her the "Wolf."

meant good-bye to the "Wolf" and very serious trouble for the prisoners. These people were ultimately taken to Germany, there to experience the hardships and discomforts of the enemy's internment camps, and during all the time which elapsed, those left behind could gather no tidings of them, knowing not whether they were "safe" (sic) in Davy Jones' locker, or marooned on some lonely island in the Pacific. True it is that many rumours gained currency as to the fate of the victims of the "Wolf." Wreckage of the "Matunga," information of the crew being cast away on a far distant island, capture by enemy raider, all these were given on the best of authority, but no confirmation of any were forthcoming, and it was not until the "Wolf" arrived back in Germany, that the tidings came through of the safety of the crews of the vessels. It is noteworthy that the capture of the ships and the safety of those aboard was a long time public property before a cautious Defence Department bade the relatives hope "that the personnel of the 'Matunga' might still be alive." Their ultimate safety is, of course, a source of extreme gratification to all, and the simple records which follow herein are from facts which Captain Donaldson was able to secure during his enforced stay aboard the raider and in the German internment camps.

And it will be readily admitted by the reader that the cruise of the "Wolf" was a most amazing voyage. To steam a distance that represents a voyage practically three times round the globe, through seas literally alive with British, French, Italian, Japanese, and American warships, for no less a period than 15 months, to capture ships flying the British, French, Spanish, Japanese, American, Norwegian, and other flags, and to arrive back with all the crews of these vessels aboard, many of whom were aboard during the greater part of the voyage, is to say the least, amazing, and can be attributed just as much to an extraordinary run of luck as anything else. The "Wolf" totally eclipsed the career of the famous "Moewe." Although the raider's captures were considerably less than either the "Emden" or the

The crew of the German raider "W olf," Commander Nerger inset.

"Moewe," still the damage done by her mines brought the percentage much above either. She had sailed the high seas for 15 months, with no friendly harbour wherein she could take refuge without being interned. She had captured and sunk about 48,000 tons, gross register, of Allied shipping, and 9,500 tons of neutral. (This, of course, is exclusive of the losses caused by her numerous minefields.) She had cruised unmolested through the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans, while our politicians at home were informing everyone that the German flag had ceased to fly on the high seas. She steamed a distance of over 47,000 miles, and lastly, she brought home 436 prisoners, in which were included twenty-two different nationalities.

Captain Nerger, his officers and crew deserve every praise for what they have done, and we, as Britishers, and therefore sportsmen, will not withhold the praise due them. But at the same time, I doubt if anyone would have the absolutely good luck to do the same thing again. "Gott mit uns." He certainly was with the "Wolf" from start to finish. For the "Wolf" was no more than an ordinary freight steamer of about 7000 tons gross burden, with a length of 400ft. and breadth 75ft. She had in pre-war days rejoiced in the name of "Wachtfels," and was owned by the Hansa line, of Bremen, having a speed of, at best, 13 knots per hour, and her complement of men of all ranks numbered about 350. These men were from the Imperial marine, amongst them being many skilled artisans, and had a most comprehensive tool shop and store room for spares. Her armament consisted of seven 5.9-inch guns, two of which were mounted under the forecastle head, and by pulling a lever the plates on the ship's side were fitted to drop outwards, it then being possible to swing the guns from right ahead to the beam on either side. There was also a 5.9-inch gun mounted on both sides of the forward well-deck and the after well-deck, and the bulwarks were swung on hinges, and being controlled by levers, were dropped outwards whenever it was necessary to show a set of teeth. A gun was mounted on the poop-deck, and this was

the only one that was exposed to view. It was cleverly camouflaged, however. Two dummy samson posts were erected at the forward end of the poop, and a short length of dummy derrick was fixed from the samson post to the body of the

Commander Nerger and his officers. This photo. was taken aboard the "Wolf" as she lay in Kiel Harbour.

gun. The muzzle of the gun was facing aft, and on this was fitted a cap with eyebolts on it, a gin block hung from one eyebolt, and topping lifts from the dummy samson posts hooked on to the others. A small awning spread over the body of the gun completed the camouflage. It just looked like an innocent derrick. She also carried four 22-inch torpedo

tubes, two being fitted, one on either side of the fore well-deck and two in a similar position in the after well-deck. These torpedo tubes, like the guns, were hidden by the bulwarks, which dropped when required. Besides the torpedoes in the tubes there were always two others handy alongside for any emergency. These, however, were only used for practice, for never once during her cruise did the "Wolf" find it necessary to launch one of these engines of destruction at a ship. She was also fitted with numerous machine-guns, and some hundreds of sea mines, commonly called "eggs" by her crew. Besides having a well-filled ammunition magazine, she carried an ample sufficiency of small arms. Then she was provided with a seaplane, called the "Wolfchen," or translated from the German, "Little Wolf," and the use to which it was put amply demonstrates the value of these "birds" in war time. Until the Indian Ocean was reached the seaplane was stowed away below decks, and was assembled and took its maiden flight upon the day the steamer "Turritella" was captured. According to the records the "Wolfchen" ascended to a height of 12,000ft. upon this occasion, and this enabled the pilots to scan the face of the ocean for no less than about 90 miles, observing any movements on the face of the ocean. Daily flights, usually early morning and late evening ascents, were undertaken and most of the captures, notably the "Turritella," "Jumna," and "Wordsworth," must be credited to this auxiliary to the raider, besides which, possible risk of capture was obviated many times by reason of these "eyes."

Commander Nerger, who commanded the "Wolf," was a man of about 45 years of age, and had, it is believed, taken part in the battle of Heligoland, being in charge of a light cruiser.

Follows then an authentic record of the Amazing Cruis of the "Wolf," starting at Kiel (Germany), and finishing at Kiel, with the period in Germany's internment camps as the last course.

Chapter I.

FROM COMMANDER NERGER'S RECORDS.

Captain Nerger, the commander of the "Wolf," wrote a book on his return to Germany, and naturally used the most flamboyant adjectives in the Teuton dictionary to glorify his admittedly amazing exploit. For the purpose of describing some of the incidents of the cruise of the raider prior to the capture of the "Matunga," the writer proposes to utilise certain portions of Nerger's narrative, and to comment on various incidents as the story proceeds. Nerger writes in the following strain:—

After endless trouble in the securing of the necessary supplies for such an enterprise as that of raider against the mighty enemy Germany was fighting, the worry to refit the ship, properly mount the armament, and stow a sufficiency of stores, ammunition, and mines, on the 10th of November, 1916, having said good-bye to relatives and friends, most of whom held very dismal hopes of ever seeing us again, we lifted anchor and set sail upon our mission.

My orders were "to operate in distant waters," particularly in the Indian Ocean, to disorganise enemy shipping and carry on maritime warfare, and to take all measures I thought advisable for this purpose, the laying of mines and minefields being mentioned as particularly desirable.

So upon the due date, we made a start, but the voyage upon which so much was hoped did not last long, for while still within the German sea patrol a fire started in one of the

coal bunkers, menacing a second and assuming rather a dangerous aspect. To quench such a fire at sea was next to impossible, as a part of the ship had to be flooded and a great deal of coal would have had to be moved. So we were forced to return to port. This bad start occurred on a Friday. As a matter of course all hands said "no luck could attend a voyage starting on a Friday," in accord with the still prevailing superstition. However, in harbour the fire was soon extinguished and the necessary repairs completed, and a few days later, on the 30th of November, 1916, we tried our luck a second time.

On this day a dense fog prevailed. When early in the morning we prepared to weigh anchor the mastheads were invisible in the grey veil, and at 30 paces hardly anything was visible, so we had to lay to and wait. The weather in the course of the forenoon clearing, the "Wolf" started on the second attempt to fulfil her mission, but again in vain. For the second time the "Wolf" had to return just after making a start, for the fog, which had disappeared for a short time, now reappeared with double density, making the passage through our own minefields far too hazardous to attempt.

All good things succeed at the third attempt. So we started the third time as soon as the weather cleared. For a considerable time we had to run at reduced speed, until the evening, when the fog lifted we were able to begin our voyage in earnest. At short distances we passed our own patrols Formerly, on such occasions, greetings and good wishes were exchanged, but complete silence reigned supreme on this occasion. Of course, the patrol had been informed previously that a German ship would pass by, but who it was, where bound, and for what purpose had, of course, to be kept a profound secret. For a short time we saw them, then gradually they disappeared in the haze—the last link which bound us to home, which probably we might not see again for a long time to come, if ever.

In fine clear weather we passed through the Cattegat, and hugged the Norwegian coast till north of Bergen, when we

struck westward for Iceland, and of British warships nothing was visible, although our wireless kept us informed of their close proximity. We steamed with all speed possible. So far, all went well, although we had yet hardly entered the British lines. But the weather soon changed and we encountered a fierce storm from the north-east, so bad that we were compelled to reduce our speed to 7 miles an hour; this in the midst of the enemy lines, and the storm becoming worse and worse.

Since our voyage would probably last a long time, we had taken on board a very extensive load, and the ship's ordinary waterline was considerably submerged. We knew well that the "Wolf's" position in such heavy weather might easily become very critical. Yet this forced delay in our voyage was also very dangerous for us. It might easily happen that we should have to pass between enemy sentinels at an unfavourable time. We were only too well aware that the British sea patrol was very thorough and that there were many enemy craft within easy reach. It all depended upon whether the ship had luck; for with our slow rate of progress we would be lost the moment we were sighted by the enemy, since however weak he might then be, he had ample time to bring sufficient power on the scene before we could get away. Even if we were running with all possible speed, the least enemy vessel could easily overhaul us, and if one of the enemy fishing boats, which also acted as watchdogs, had observed us and sent information by wireless, it would have been an easy matter for the enemy to terminate our enterprise there and then. In spite of this, I never had a moment's doubt about a favourable ending to our mission, so firmly was I convinced of my luck, which, as a matter of fact, never deserted us. None of John Bull's ships appeared, nor did we have any unpleasant experiences from the storms which raged. Indeed we found always that the most unpleasant events ultimately turned out in our favour. After several hours the storm abated, the sea calmed, and with lighter hearts we again went ahead full steam.

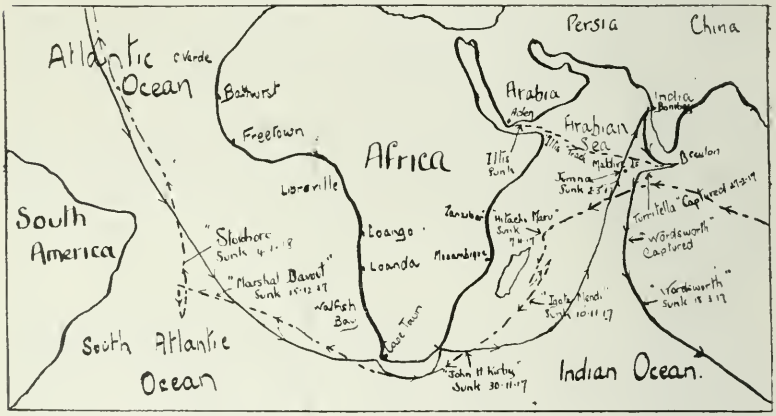
But we were a little too soon with our rejoicings, as another heavy storm developed, this time from a westerly direction, which compelled us to lay to. This latter storm was worse than the previous one. The "Wolf" laboured very badly and every other minute a heavy sea swept the deck. Everything on board was moving riotously, tables and chairs careered wildly about, and meals were impossible. And there appeared no prospect of the weather mending. Incessantly the heavy seas broke over the ship, the air was filled with salt spray, and the ship shook in every fibre from the heavy pounding she was receiving. An extra heavy wave carried away a safety float provided with a calcium light, which we carried on deck, and we were not a little astonished when close to the ship a high, brilliant flame appeared, which travelled slowly with the wind. Immediately after a second light appeared, this time on deck, and all this in a night when it was of the highest importance to our safety that we should remain invisible in our attempt to pass the enemy's lines. The calcium lights lit up the night like daylight. Of course we soon disposed of those on deck, but we were powerless to deal with the one floating on the sea. It calmly drifted further away so that for about an hour the position of the "Wolf" was distinctly visible. To complete the precariousness of our position, a heavy snow storm set in. The temperature sank rapidly. The "Wolf" was soon enveloped in snow and ice, and communication on deck was almost impossible in this ice and snow covered condition. All our guns and armour on deck was thickly covered with ice, and it would have required much time and exertion to make our weapons workable should fight have become necessary.

After a time, however, the storm abated, and we thought our troubles were over for this time. But soon we had to learn differently. Hardly had it become calm when a storm of terrible violence struck the ship from the north. We had again to lay to for 20 hours. The "Wolf" behaved very well, despite all the storms, and we encountered a good many more. And being heavily over-loaded this behaviour was all the more satisfactory, and indeed aroused considerable astonishment

and envy amongst enemy and neutral captains later on, when they came to experience heavy weather with us. Of course we did not get off altogether free of damage. Amongst other things a deal of crockery had been broken. At first I was rather perplexed on this score, as we expected later to get a good many prisoners. But I could have saved myself any worry, as captured enemy ships generously supplied us with more than we needed, besides all we required for any repairs to the "Wolf." Sometimes in our passage through the North Sea we travelled with all lights burning to give the "Wolf" the appearance of a harmless passenger steamer quietly following her course. At others we crept along with not a light visible and our lookouts keeping a sharp lookout on all points. Without meeting any trouble we were at last clear of the enemy lines of blockade, and could now continue our voyage. On the 10th of December we reached the free Atlantic. Immediately after passing the enemy lines, we dispensed with the use of one boiler, as economy in the use of coal, water, provisions, and other material was the first necessity of the voyage.

During the next few days nothing of interest transpired. On different routes between America and Europe steamers were sighted, which we always gave a wide berth. My officers, all of whom were in the dark in regard to my plans, shook their heads regarding my procedure. They were wholly disappointed at my avoidance of the enemy merchantmen, expecting instead that we should have taken them, but despite this and the unfavourable weather, the spirit of the men was good. The bad weather continued for the greater part of the passage through the North Atlantic. Throughout the men had been keyed up to a pitch of excitement and every day had brought its alarms. But now there was much less excitement, the risks being much less, so while enjoying a well-earned rest, we made ourselves busy with the outward part of the ship. Our problem was to avoid a conflict for the present, for even if victorious in a fight, we would very soon have lost the power to proceed with our projected war on enemy commerce.

It was about this time that we met with the wreck of a sailing ship of remarkable appearance. It was half crushed in, burnt out, and without masts. Its name was "Esberne Snare." We looked at it from all sides, but were unable to get on board on account of a very heavy swell. There was no reason for us to trouble to get it out of the way, as it could only disturb enemy shipping. Besides I did not feel inclined to waste ammunition upon the derelict, as the British Prime Minister had declared in Parliament the war would last for 20 years, and we needed all we carried.



An endeavor has been made to give an indication in this small map of the activities of the "Wolf" in the South Atlantic and in the Indian Oceans. Reference to the large map in the back of the book will give the whole of the operations of the raider.

Chapter II.

CROSSING THE LINE.

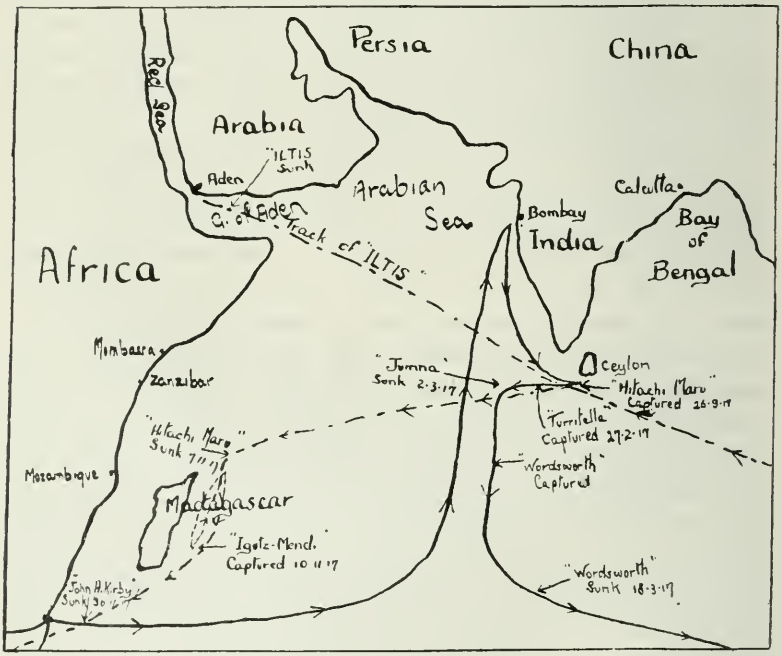
On Christmas Eve we had a jollification, though the "Christmas Tree" and our presents were missing. We had none on board, on account of the nature of our expedition. Secrecy having to be kept inviolate, we had no presents or special supplies aboard for the festive season. However, every man aboard took things as they were, well knowing that now they could not be altered. From wood and cable strands, painted green, several imitations of small Christmas trees were produced; we had candles in plenty, also electric globes were made use of. Several of these trees looked very uncanny, but with a mind attuned to the occasion, everything added to the prevailing good feeling and harmony between the officers and men. The crew were also provided with humorous newspapers and with ample good food everything went off quite well. In the officers' mess the jollification was somewhat disturbed by the Christmas tree catching fire, but no harm resulted. It only needed the necessary temperature and the snow to make our Christmas something like ordinary so far as seafaring men knew it. By this time, however, the thermometer registered about 30 degrees of heat, which was far different to snow conditions. None of us were much disturbed in our enjoyment by the milder weather, and after a short church service I briefly addressed the men, finishing with a reference to home and the dear ones left behind. And our enjoyment was not disturbed at this time by any untoward happening, though by wireless we learned that several enemy cruisers were busy in various neighbouring localities, but whether they were travelling or in harbour at Cape Verde, we were unable to ascertain.

Gradually we got nearer to the Equator. Several times I had been near it, but I had never crossed it, and to the amusement of all the men I had to submit to the ordeal of the "Neptune's Baptism." Unfortunately, there were no ladies present, who, on such occasions, play such an important role in the ceremonies, but we had a number of shirkers aboard who. by all sorts of excuses and presents tried to evade the ordeal. It was no good, however, since those who pretended to have crossed the Equator before had to verify their statement, either by showing the Baptism certificate or bringing forward the witnesses. If he failed to do so, then he was the more thoroughly baptised. The ceremony was as follows:—One of the crew appeared as "Triton," clad in a most fantastic costume, consisting principally of bed-linen. Being announced to me, he declared he came on behalf of the god "Neptune," and stating that "H.M." would have the pleasure of visiting the ship with all his followers to perform the sacred rite of the "Baptism" on all those who had not previously crossed the "Line," and hoped to be received with corresponding honours. I replied that I considered this a great honour, and would do everything to make his stay as pleasant as possible. Then giving him some bottles of beer and some cigars, he took his departure.

The next day showed the real holiday spirit. The sea was calm; very softly the Atlantic seemed to breathe; the sun shone brightly from a cloudless deep blue sky, and soon appeared the god "Neptune" with his spouse, the noble "Thetis." The "Autocrat" of the "Oceans" looked remarkably like the ambassador of the previous evening. In his toilet, as well as that of his wife, bed clothes seemed to play the most important part. He appeared with a mighty flowing beard, which lent quite a patriarchal appearance. From the head of "Thetis," who conveyed a very masculine and muscular form, flowed locks of cable yarn right to the deck. The train of followers was both numerous and interesting. The black attendants had blackened themselves with soot from the funnel. over which they put a coat of fat, and were shining brilliantly

in the sunlight. A court fool was provided, he carried a high society hat on his head and wore a frock coat which originated from the establishment of one of the most modern tailors, and had hands and feet like a frog, and added much to the general amusement. The court barber flourished an immense wooden razor, and the court preacher gave an address worthy of notice. Ordering the whole personnel to stand at attention, I led "H.M." and his followers along to the throne which had been erected on the main hatch, where "Neptune" seated himself and declared that he was ready to proceed with the ceremony. I thanked him for his visit, and reiterated my willingness to let the baptism both of myself and my men proceed. The ceremony proceeded in the orthodox fashion. To the amusement of all on board, I was the the first to submit to the ordeal. With two champagne bottles the men had, by artful knots and pleated strands of rope yarn, produced a wonderful though rather cumbersome double spy glass. This I was ordered to take, and look skywards to find the line. As a matter of course, the bottles had been filled with water and I got drenched from head to foot. Anything milder than this was impossible, and though the commanders also got the same treatment, all the other participants fared much worse. Next came the baptism. Next to the main hatch a bathing sail had been rigged and filled with about 5 feet of water. Close by "H.M. Barber" had stowed his lather, which consisted of all possible and impossible smeary and disgusting material. On the other side of the bath sail was a wind sail rigged, ordinarily used to convey fresh air to the holds of the ship, but now used for the baptised to crawl through after they came out of the bath. So, after being immersed, the victims were required to crawl through this wind sail and as soon as they entered, members of "Neptune's" staff played the fire hoses upon them from both ends, thoroughly drenching the unfortunates over and over again. And if he expected that after this the ceremony was over for him and it was the turn of the next man he was grievously disappointed, for on emerging, he fell into the hands of one of "Neptune's" attendants, who now smeared

his face all over with the indescribable latner, and he was then well and truly shaved by the "Barber" with the immense wooden razor. The victim was then again well doused with water and for him the actual ceremony was over. This procedure was repeated over and over again until all had been through, and the fun was thoroughly enjoyed. Then came the conclusion of the ceremonies. "Neptune" distributed the honours. To me he presented the "Main Yard" Medal to carry round my neck, the pilots of the seaplane receiving "Flying Medals," and everybody also receiving a medal appropriate to his position. The final act was the appearance of the "Beggar Monks," who were well rewarded for their activities by an abundant harvest of presents in cigars and beer.



This map indicates roughly the position from which the "Turritella," renamed the "Iltis" by the Germans, was despatched on a mine laying expedition to Aden. The larger map in the back of the book is much more comprehensive.

Chapter III.

LAYING MINES.

On 16th of January, 1917, we reached the South African coast in perfect weather, which allowed us to see a distance of fully 30 miles. Late in the afternoon we saw smoke ascending dead ahead; shortly after we made out 7 ships, some giants with two funnels amongst them. Even had the "Wolf" been ready to spring, the appearance of an enemy armoured cruiser at their head, seemingly issuing orders for the night, rapidly disillusioned us as to our chances of working mischief. As far as we could make out it was a squadron of Australian troopships convoyed by one or more cruisers, and all thought of troubling them was quickly abandoned. We steered off very gradually, turning away like a peaceful merchantman. When they took no notice of us and were out of sight, we all breathed much more freely. A fight with one of his sort would have been disastrous to us.

That same evening we started laying mines off the Cape of Good Hope. Very many times we had to go out of the way of steamers so as not to be discovered at our labours, for it would have been very unfortunate for us to have witnessed a ship strike one of our mines, and we contrived always to be out of sight when such occurred.

After we finished our task around South Africa we continued our voyage through the Indian Ocean, where we also continued to work on the steamer routes. Our work soon began to bear fruit. On 27th January we intercepted a wireless from Capetown as follows: "Submarines off Capetown." We were at first rather surprised to hear of U boats having already travelled that distance, and when we learned that it was our mines that caused the impression, we were unable to understand how the usually astute seagoing Englishman should have come to that conclusion. We certainly had all the credit of the

difficulties in which the enemy's shipping found itself, and of these results we certainly had no cause for complaint. It was asserted at this time that the second largest British liner, the "Aquitania," 46,000 tons, with Australian troops on board, had been lost in this locality.* Prisoners who came on board later on, distinctly declared that this ship had been lost at the time stated on the South African coast, thus confirming our news. The British were completely in the dark as to the cause. Then they began to suspect neutral ships of having laid mines, even going so far as to detain captains of neutral shipping for months, accusing them of laying the mines and subjecting them to prosecution for doing so. Of course, they were quite wrong. Yet through their mistake, we were not suspected, and no search followed, as far as we know. We now steamed towards Ceylon, making this neighbourhood about the middle of February. We laid mines in various localities where we judged enemy shipping would journey and of their effectiveness we very soon had reports, particularly from Bombay and Ceylon. Off Colombo we had some very unpleasant moments. In our occupation of mine laying we were compelled to run close in shore, and while operating off Colombo, we came within the glare of the port search-lights. We were close to the entrance of the harbour laying mines. The night was dark and well suited for our purpose, when suddenly two searchlights appeared, searching the darkness. Moment by moment they came nearer, converging upon each end of the "Wolf." Every moment we expected the lights to play on the ship, but they just stopped short of us, and then went further afield. It was a most thrilling period. Would they discover us to be an enemy mine-layer? The hearts of all the crew beat much faster, and all experienced a sense of great relief when the searchlights passed on. For all the excitement, however, we did not discontinue laying mines for a moment. During the next day we intercepted a wireless message stating that the "Worstershire," a 7000 ton steamer,

Author's Note.—Nerger's claim to having bagged the "Aquitania" is incorrect, as that fine vessel of the well-known Cunard Line is still going strong.

had sunk from an internal enemy explosion. We knew well that this was no internal explosion, but that the "Worstershire" had run upon one of our recently laid mines. The ship went down twelve miles out from Colombo, and again the enemy was puzzled. Indians and neutrals were accused of secreting infernal machines on board or of having laid mines. A few days later another ship, the "Perseus," of about equal tonnage to the "Worstershire," ran upon a mine near the same spot, and from reports, which we received later, it

The R.M.S. "Mongolia," so well known in Australian ports, was sunk by a mine off Bombay. She was a liner of about 11,000 tons.

was clearly shown that about Colombo a great amount of shipping was lost. It was also stated later that the P. and O. liner "Mongolia" (well known in the Australian trade) ran upon a mine months later, in June, and was not by any means the only ship that had been lost by striking a drifting mine.

In Bombay it was soon known that all these mishaps were due to mines. Intercepting a wireless, we found that the enemy had discovered the secret and had informed general shipping of the existence and exact locality of a minefield, adding "port is closed."

Chapter IV.

CAPTURE OF THE "TURRITELLA."

Our mission in this part having been fulfilled we now prepared for a cruise much further afield in the endeavour to still further disorganise the enemy's commercial shipping, by the sinking of enemy merchantmen.

On 27th February we found ourselves between Aden and Colombo, and early in the morning espied a steamer. We had learned from our wireless that no neutral shipping travelled on this route, so surmised that it must be an enemy ship. At 8 o'clock in the morning we put a shot across her bows and had her safe and sound. It turned out to be a one-time German vessel named the "Gutenfels," captured by the enemy and re-named the "Turritella."

Having recaptured her we decided that she should be added to the German fleet as a mine-layer, changing her name to the "Iltis." To this end, a big gang of my crew were soon on board, minelaying doors were cut in the counters of the tanker, rails laid on her decks for mines, and wireless was fitted up. About 50 mines were placed aboard, and the Chinese crew were left to assist the prize crew, which consisted of Lieutenant-captain Brandes and 27 men. Towards evening we took leave from our new consort, ordering her to lay mines in the Gulf of Aden, and appointed a place for a future meeting.

Captain T. G. Meadows, of the "Turritella," was a New Zealander—a big, hefty fellow, full of a rough good-humour, and whose main argument was that the war would last for at least another ten years. As a matter of fact, he once bet Lieut. Von Oswald, the prison officer (nicknamed by the prisoners "Little Willie") £500 that the war would not be over until

1927. He had the distinction of being the only shipmaster to put in a full year on board the "Wolf," although Captain W. S. Wickman ran him close, being just one day short of the year when we landed at Kiel. Along with his officers, nine in number, he soon made himself at home, and having a decidedly humorous vein was able to keep up the spirits of the other prisoners. One of his jokes is worth relating. He had just completed one year aboard the "Wolf," and early in the morning he accosted the flying master or pilot, with a very earnest mien, and the following conversation resulted:—

"Good morning, flying master."

"Good morning, captain."

"Do you know I am just one year aboard to-day, a whole year at sea, a prisoner on board a German man o' war?"

"I am pleased to hear it," said the flying master, "you shall have something special to celebrate the occasion with."

"Well, flying master," said Meadows, "will you do me a favour?"

"Yes," agreed the officer, "if it is possible."

"Well," said the captain, "will you ask Captain Nerger if he will present me with the Iron Cross of the first class, if possible, or if not possible, then of the second class?"

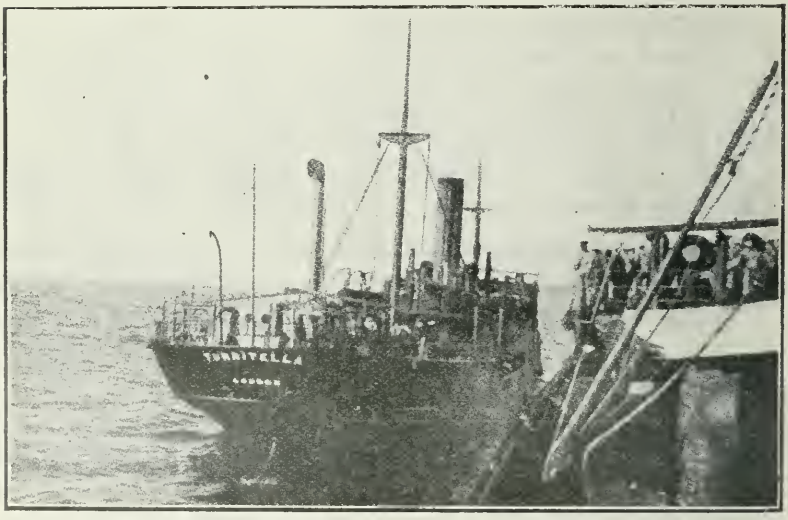
It was a long time before the flying master could be induced to see the joke.

One day, at which time the "Wolf" was approaching Germany, he was discovered holding portion of a trousers leg tied at both ends. Questioned, he said it contained all his belongings gathered over the past 30 years, and he was ready should they have to swim for their lives, so that he would not land as a vagrant.

Two days later, in the early morning, we discovered the steamer "Jumna," bound from Torre Veijo to Calcutta with a cargo of salt. Captain Wickman, of the "Jumna," had been running in the war zone since the commencement of the hostilities, and anticipated a quiet spell after leaving Suez. His

gun had been taken off at Port Said, it being supposed that there was nothing in the Indian Ocean to molest Allied shipping, so about seven o'clock in the morning we found ourselves about two miles distant, the enemy running much slower than we.

I (the author) will interrupt Nerger's story here to describe what subsequently occurred, as the prisoners saw it. When the "Wolf" got a little closer her sides were dropped and the gun swung out. A shot was fired across her bows, but



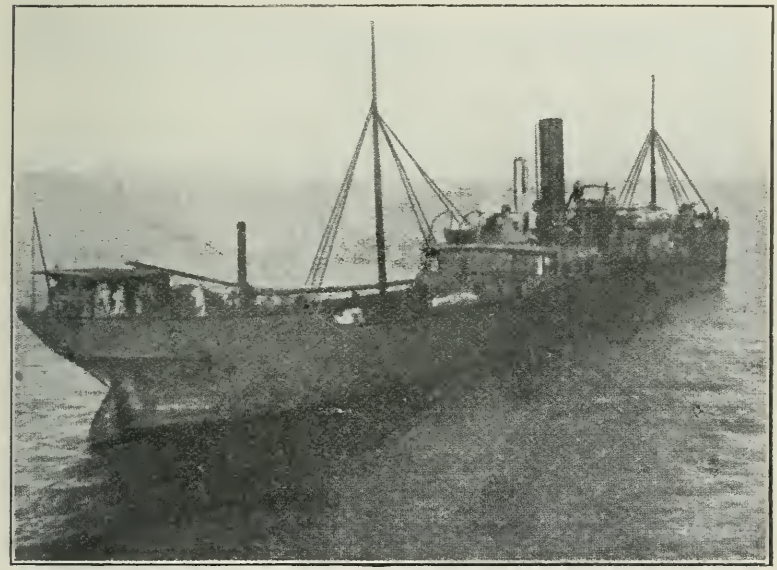
The "Turritella," as she lay alongside the "Wolf."

failed to frighten her, however, and she came on heading straight for the "Wolf." The Germans, as usual, got very excited; they put a shell hurriedly into the breech of the port after-gun before it was swung out, and the breech was closed, but meeting an obstruction, caused the shell to explode. This did great damage, destroying the after bulwarks, and main rigging, damaging the tackling on the mainmast, and killing four men and wounding twenty-four seriously. An oil tank caught fire and blazed furiously, while some ammunition on deck exploded with great

noise. From the other end of the vessel, however, a shot was thrown across the bows of the enemy, and stopping, they soon had a prize crew in charge. They took the prisoners on board, and after two days' work to get all the coal on board (for coal was their very life blood), they sunk the ship.

Captain Wickman was a quiet, studious man, never to be seen without a book, hardly giving himself time for meals before returning to his beloved studies.

* * *



S.s. "Jumna," about 5,000 tons, and carried a cargo of salt when captured.

I am afraid that Nerger, who seldom, if ever, saw the prisoners, is mistaken in Captain Wickman, of the "Jumna." I naturally came to know him well, and I would certainly never dream of describing him as a bookworm. He was a very cheerful little chap from South Shields, with the Tynesider's bump of argument developed in a remarkable degree, as we soon learned. In this respect I might also add that his cousin, Captain J

S. Shields, of the "Wordsworth," ran him very closely. The lastnamed was also a South Shields man, and he kept us alive. He would spend his time provoking arguments, and then, when most of us were at the point of losing our tempers, he would calmly stroll off with a quiet smile on his face to start another row elsewhere. A fine stamp of Scotchman was Mr. Stephens, second officer of the s.s. "Jumna." He was seventy-three years of age, and could get around as "spry" as most of us. He came through his captivity without a day's sickness, and

The sinking of the "Jumna." From a photo. taken aboard the "Wolf."

was held in high respect by the Huns, although they never offered to release him.

A wireless was intercepted shortly after describing every detail of the "Wolf," which was rather unpleasant news for them, and could only be traced to the "Iltis," which they surmised had been captured either during or after the performance of her task. It was thought that the Chinese crew had given a good description of the "Wolf," and the Indian Ocean

would now become far too warm for her, since, although she could effect an excellent disguise with her telescopic masts and funnel, she would be sure to be stopped for examination on sight. This inference was correct, as was found later.

I have been able to gather something concerning the end of the "Iltis," and will set it forth at this stage. It appears that after parting from the "Wolf" the "Iltis" steamed straight for Aden, and there laid her mines without being seen. She was returning to the rendezvous previously arranged upon when she was sighted by a small British gunboat. The commander of the gunboat signalled the "Iltis," and inquired her name, where from, and where bound. The "Iltis" gave a fictitious name, and replied that she was bound from Aden to Bombay. The British commander, not being satisfied, turned and followed her, and at the same time wirelessed Aden to find out if a ship of that name and class had left there. The reply came back that no vessel of that name or class had left the port. He thereupon promptly ordered the "Iltis" to stop, and fired a shot across her bows. The Huns stopped, fixed two bombs on the "Iltis," got into the boats, and pulled away. A few minutes later the bombs exploded, and the "Iltis," ex-"Turritella," went to the bottom. The Germans and the Chinese crew were taken on board the gunboat, and there the Chinese gave a full description of the "Wolf" to the commander. This description was at once wirelessed to Colombo, and was, of course, intercepted by the "Wolf." Nerger therefore soon knew that his consort was no more, and that it was advisable for him to leave that locality immediately, before the British bull pups got on his trail.

Chapter V.

NERGER BAGS THE FIRST SAILER.

On the afternoon of March 11 another vessel was sighted, and the "Wolf" gave chase, coming up with her victim in about two hours. She proved to be the steamer "Wordsworth," of London, out from Bassien to London, with over 5000 tons of rice aboard valued at over £300,000. She had very poor coal on board, and was steaming very badly, making about 6 knots, consequently the "Wolf" had no trouble in coming up to her. The "Wolf" wanted both coal and rice from the "Wordsworth," and as the sea was too rough for the vessels to lie alongside each other, the "Wordsworth" had to be taken along with the "Wolf." For seven days the "Wordsworth" was in company, and many were the attempts to get alongside. but the "Wordsworth" persistently refused to stop her graceful rolling exhibitions for a single minute. Finally the Germans lost patience, and on the 18th March, thinking probably that the enemy cruisers would be looking out for him, Nerger ordered a boatload of rice and all the stores to be transferred, and the "Wordsworth" was sunk with bombs.

Captain J. W. Shields, of the "Wordsworth," was surprised on boarding the "Wolf" to find his cousin, Captain Wickman, already installed as a prisoner. They had not met for many years previously.

Through the Indian Ocean the "Wolf" steamed in a south-easterly direction round Australia, and very soon ran across a sailing vessel in ballast. It turned out to be the "Dee," Captain Rugg, from Mauritius to Westralia. They obtained some necessary provisions, and sunk the ship. Captain John B. Rugg and his mate were the only white men on board the "Dee," the rest of the crew being Mauritius niggers.

Captain J. B. Rugg, of the barque "Dee," was a Londoner, but many old-time Sydney shipping folk will remember him when he traded to Port Jackson in such well-known sailing craft as the "Neatsfield" and the "Gladstone." He was a typical sailor of the old school, and had stuck faithfully to his early love, the "wind-jammer," and he regarded us poor mortals who had changed to "steam" as persons quite inferior in every way.

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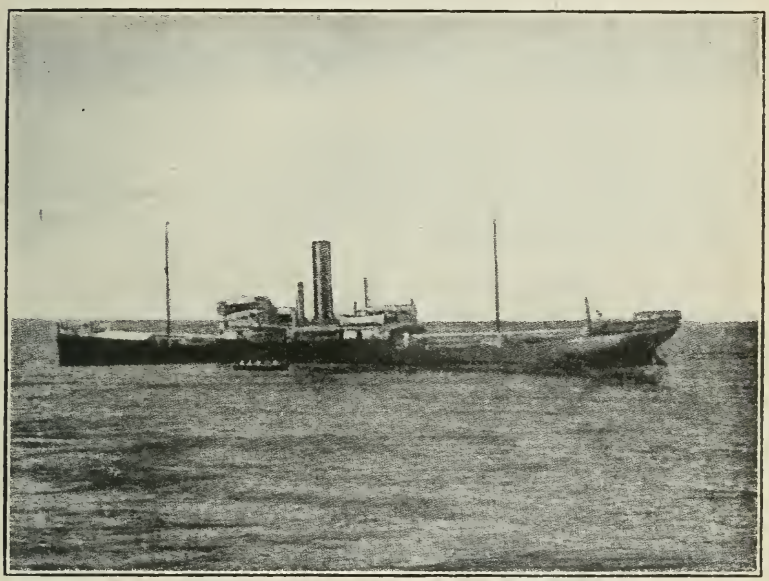
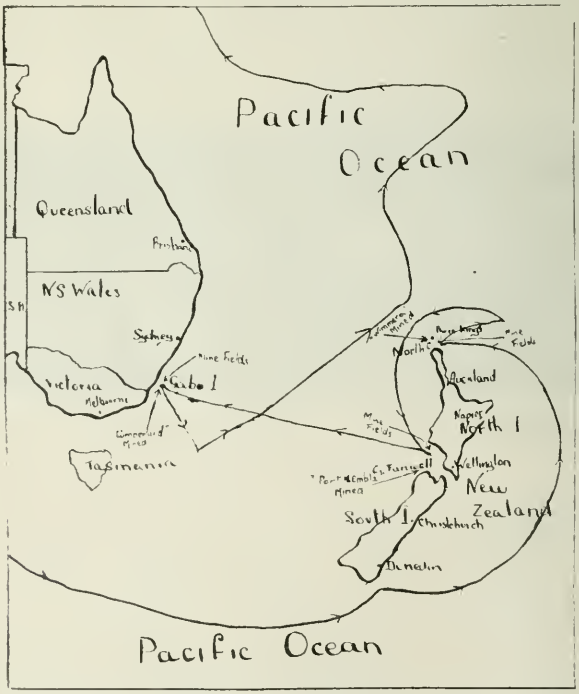


S.s. "Wordsworth," a steamer of about 5,000 tons, Capt. J. S. Shields in command. She was carrying a full cargo of rice for England when captured by the "Wolf."

Continuing the translation of Nerger:—We now travelled around Australia and stayed several days in the southern part of the Tasman Sea, south of New Zealand, to intercept grain and coal ships, so that we might replenish our vanishing stock of coals. Unfortunately, our hoping was in vain, as coal transport to South America from Australia seemed to have completely ceased. Several

weeks we were waiting here without seeing a ship, and then steamed further north. Here also no ships came our way, so we then made our way around the Antipode Isles, north of the Bounty Isles, towards Cook Straits. All communication seemed to have ceased; even the occasional intercepted wireless messages brought nothing new, except that on 7th of April, 1917, America had declared war on Germany.

On 14th of May an intercepted wireless, directed to a firm in Australia, informed us that the captain of the American schooner "Winslow," was prepared, in pursuance of his contract, to take lading from Sydney. We stood north of New Zealand, and as we sighted nothing either from deck nor by using the seaplane, which we utilised on every occasion for spying, I thought it wise to repair, and so steamed for Sunday Island (Kermaedoc Group) to overhaul the machinery.



This sectional map is interesting, showing particularly just how close the raider got to Australia and New Zealand.

Barque "Dee," of Mauritius, in command of Capt. J. B. Rugg, captured by the "Wolf," 30.3.'17. She was bound for Bunbury, W.A., to load timber, when captured.

Exit the "Wordsworth." Bombs were, as usual, placed aboard.

The "Dee" went down with all sails set.

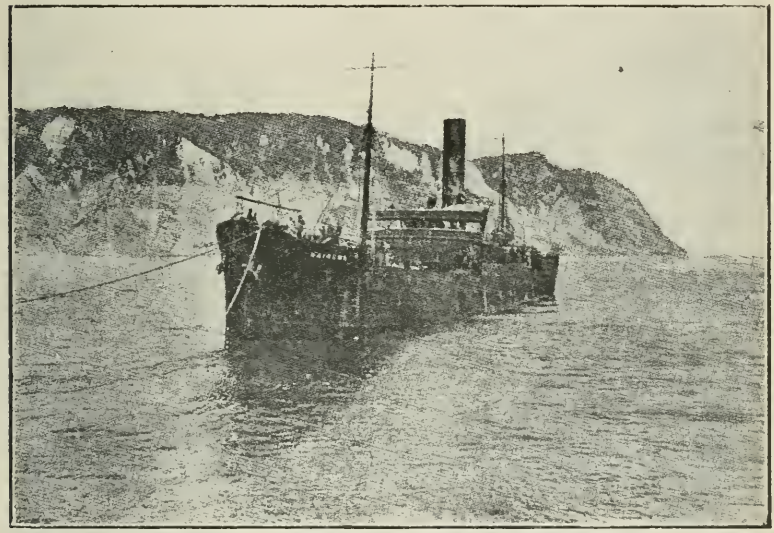
Chapter VI.

CAPTURE OF THE S.S. "WAIRUNA" (N.Z.).

I will again interrupt, and state what occurred here. In a snug anchorage, with no likelihood of being disturbed, they commenced to give a good overhaul to both engines and boilers. The "Wolf's" officers spent a great deal of their time on shore exploring the island. On several occasions some of the prisoners were given one of the boats, and allowed to go fishing. Of course, they had to give their parole not to escape, but the Germans took no chances, and always had a boat full of armed sailors cruising about handy. The fish were plentiful, and made a much-needed change in the menu of the prisoners. On the 2nd June the Germans started to rig gear for shifting coal from No. 4 hatch into the bunkers, and during the afternoon the ship's band discoursed vile music on the poop, to the annoyance of some and amusement of others among the prisoners. Suddenly a change came over the band; first one man dropped his instrument and fled off the poop, to be followed in quick succession by the others, until only the poor chap at the big drum was left, and he was banging away for all he was worth. On looking to see what had caused this uncalled for and most un-naval like behaviour, the prisoners saw a large steamer just clearing the point quite close inshore. Immediately all was confusion on the "Wolf." The prisoners, as usual, were hustled below and battened down. The "Wolf" only had steam on one boiler, but she had her trusty "buzzfly," the seaplane, ready to drop in the water.

Meanwhile, on board the other vessel, which was the "Wairuna," Captain Saunders was wondering what the mischief this vessel was doing anchored at Sunday Island, and was studying her closely through his glasses when suddenly he heard a buzzing noise overhead, and lo! there was a seaplane flying the German ensign. A few minutes later the seaplane

swept low across the bows of the "Wairuna," and dropped something on her forecastle head. The crew naturally thought it was a bomb and ran aft, but nothing happened. One of them was persuaded to see what it was. It proved to be a small canvas bag, weighted, and contained the following message:—"Steer towards German cruiser, and do not use your wireless; if you do not obey this order your bridge will be bombed and your ship shelled by German cruiser." To emphasise this message a bomb was dropped just ahead of the "Wairuna," which



"Wairuna," as she lay after being captured by the "Wolf."

exploded on touching the water. The "Wairuna" was stopped and shortly after a motor launch, with Lieut. Rosa and a prize crew, took charge of her. In the meantime, the "Wolf" had got under weigh and was steaming out, but on seeing that her assistance was not required she returned to her anchorage. The "Wairuna" was brought in and anchored. The "Wairuna" belonged to the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, and was bound from Auckland to San Francisco. Her general cargo was, I believe, valued at over a million pounds.

Captain Saunders received no information from the naval authorities at Auckland of the presence of an enemy raider in the Pacific.

Captain Saunders, of the "Wairuna," was a Londoner, and was the only one of us privileged to receive a note by aerial post from Commander Nerger. He is well known by those that travel by the Union S.S. Co.'s trans-Pacific services, and will return to the route shortly in charge of a new "Wairuna."

Next morning the "Wairuna" was brought alongside the "Wolf," and work commenced taking over coal and cargo. The "Wolf" scored 1100 tons of coal from the "Wairuna," besides 350 tons of fresh water, milk, meat, cheese, and other provisions, also 40 sheep, which were very welcome. On the evening of the 6th June two of the prisoners decided to make an attempt to escape. They reckoned that if they could swim ashore they were right, as the Germans would have a hard job to find them in the thick bush with which the island was covered. Just before sundown they managed to slip unobserved over the stern. They intended to hang on to the propellor until dark, and then swim for the beach. The nearest point of land was at least a mile away, and rather a nasty surf on the beach. What happened to them no one knows, but the general opinion is that the poor fellows perished in their attempt to swim for liberty. They were a couple of fine young men: Mr. Clelland was chief officer and Mr. Steers was second engineer, both of the s.s. "Turritella." The curious part was that they were not missed by the Germans until three weeks later, as they neglected to have a roll-call of prisoners during that time.

When, on having a roll-call of the prisoners, it was discovered that two were missing, the prison officer Lieutenant Von Oswald (better known to the prisoners as "Little Willie," on account of his typical Prussian arrogance, and likeness to the German Crown Prince), fairly excelled himself. He told the prisoners that it was not a

gentlemanly action to escape, and that up till then they had been treated as guests of the Kaiser, but in future they would be treated as prisoners of war. This was received with the greatest amusement by the prisoners, and "Little Willie," being a German, could not see the funny side of it.

When Commander Nerger heard that two prisoners were gone, he immediately ordered all prisoners to be kept below for 21 days, only to be allowed on deck for one hour per day for exercise. "Little Willie" was confined to his room for seven days for neglect of duty in not having a daily roll-call of the prisoners.

After taking over all the coal and filling up all available space with cargo, Nerger decided to sink the "Wairuna." Accordingly one morning both ships proceeded to sea for this purpose, but a sail was sighted to the eastward, so the "Wairuna" was sent back to the anchorage, and the "Wolf" gave chase. The vessel was quickly overtaken, and a prize crew put on board. She proved to be the American four-masted schooner "Winslow," from Newcastle, N.S.W., to Apia in Samoa, of which we had already been advised by wireless. Her cargo consisted of benzine, fire-brieks and 300 tons of coal, the two latter items being very acceptable to the "Wolf." Fire-bricks were badly wanted for her furnaces. The "Winslow" was therefore taken into the anchorage. The following day the "Wairuna" was taken out to meet her fate. Two bombs were exploded under her bottom, but she refused to sink, so the "Wolf" opened fire on her with her 5.9-inch guns. The shooting was very poor, and it took 36 shots before the "Wairuna" took her final plunge, and Davy Jones cut another notch on his stick.

Now came the "Winslow's" turn. She was brought alongside, and all the coal and a quantity of fire-bricks were taken aboard the "Wolf." She was then taken to sea to share the same fate as was meted out to her British sisters. First two bombs were tried, but the "Winslow" only smiled at them. Being a wooden ship, she was a tough problem to sink.

Two more bombs were fixed, one aft and one forward. These almost blew the entire ends of the ship out, but still she floated serenely. The guns were now brought to play on her, in order to shoot away her masts. Thirty-eight shots were fired without a single hit, but the thirty-ninth shot hit the bowsprit and brought down all four masts, but the hull still floated complacently on the surface. The "Wolf" gave her best, and steamed off in disgust..

Captain Trudgett, of the schooner "Winslow," which, by the way, was the first American vessel captured by the "Wolf," was born and bred in London, having in early manhood gone to the States. The ill-fated voyage on the "Winslow" was intended to be his last before settling on shore to that occupation beloved by sailors until they try it—chicken-farming.

The "Wolf" was now ready to go on with her visiting list, and leave her cards on New Zealand and Australia. Of course, she would make sure that no one was at home before doing so. From Sunday Island she steamed straight to the north end of New Zealand, and laid her "hell machines" somewhere between the Three Kings and the North Cape.

From there she dodged down the west coast and into Cook Straits. Here she laid two fields, about 25 mines in each field, and then set her course for the Australian coast. Somewhere in the vicinity of Gabo Island she laid a field of 19 mines, and commenced to lay a second field, when something gave her a holy fright, for she suddenly went off at full speed to the east-south-east, and never again approached the Australian Coast. On the following day she hauled up to the northward, and continued going north midway between Australia and New Zealand, then north-eastward towards Norfolk Island.

Chapter VII.

THE "BELUGA" CAPTURED.

Continuing from the translation of Nerger's records:— On the 6th of July an intercepted wireless informed us that the "Cumberland" had run upon a mine about 10 miles from Cape Gabo, and was calling for assistance. The answer, which we took to be from a Japanese cruiser, was the query? "Whereabout is Cape Gabo?" Sydney also replied to the S.O.S., saying that assistance had been dispatched from Jervis Bay, then followed another wireless from the Jap. saying "he had been informed that an internal explosion and not a mine was the cause of the trouble, and begged for further advice." For several hours nothing transpired, then someone wirelessed "'Cumberland' continuing her voyage under own steam." This was not exactly pleasant news to us, but soon after the Jap. wirelessed "arrived alongside Cumberland 11 o'clock this evening and sent several officers on board. Ship lies with a list of 21 degrees to starboard. The position is most critical. The ship is deserted. I will stand by until daylight to see if help is possible." The captain reported that the misfortune occurred at 8.40 in the morning, as the ship was a few miles off Gabo Island. Two distinct explosions occurred and the ship had to be anchored After a vain attempt to stop the leak, the ship began to sink by the nose, seeking her resting place on the bottom of the ocean. Following the experience of the "Cumberland" we read in newspapers taken on a captured vessel later, of numerous "internal explosions" which had taken place in various localities to vessels trading around the Australian coast. These were credited to I.W.W.

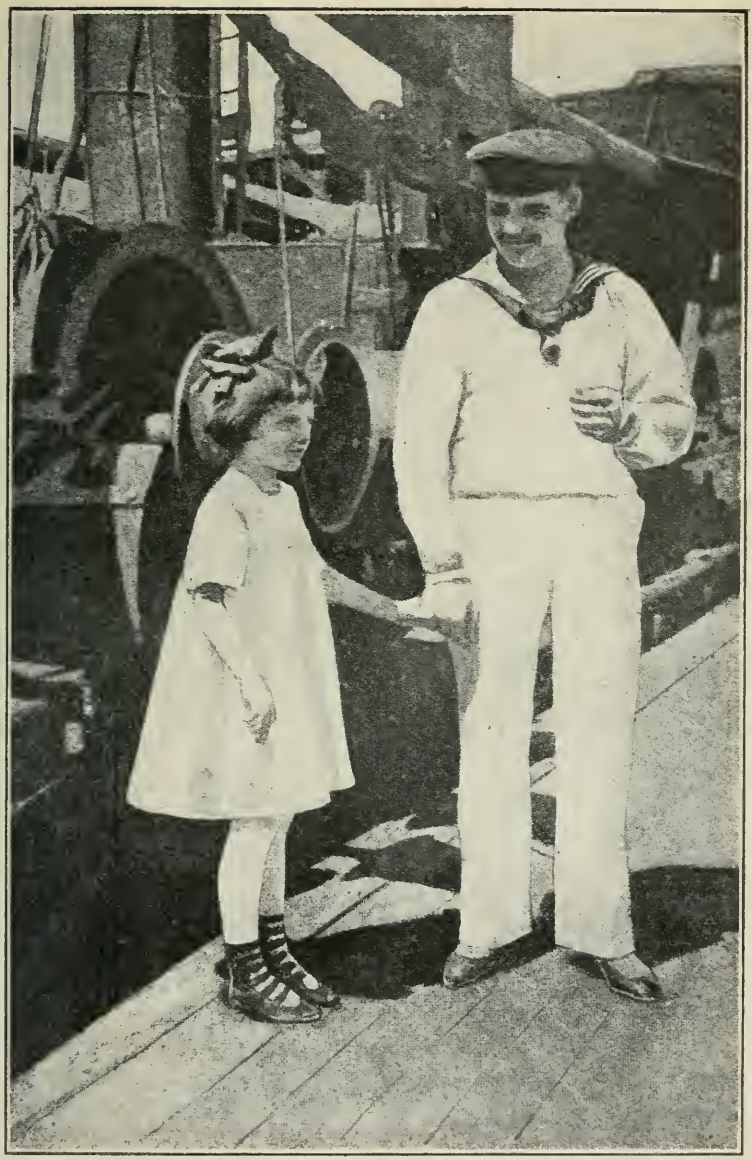
organisations. Of course, we knew better, having no doubt that the ships had ran into the mine fields sown by us.

* * *

The "Wolf" now steered, without seeing a single vessel, on a north-easterly course, out of the Tasman Sea towards the Fiji Isles. After several days they sighted a small barque

Barque "Beluga," about 500 tons gross. She was an old whaler, and was commanded by Capt. Cameron, who was accompanied by his wife and little daughter.

named the "Beluga.' This vessel had formerly been an American whaler, and was laden with benzine and gasoline, which was very welcome, as the "Wolf" was very short of both. Lieut. Zelaske, with a prize crew, took charge of her, and before anything could be done with her another vessel hove in sight, and the "Wolf" cleared off after it. This steamer, which it was believed was the "Fiona," belonging to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, got away, however, and the "Wolf" was cheated of her prey. After a couple of days' absence



"Anita" Cameron, daughter of Captain Cameron of the "Beluga," and "Darling Paul." The Germans called the little girl "Bordplage," meaning "Ship's Plague."

she returned to the "Beluga," and after transferring what cargo and stores were needed, together with the personnel of the "Beluga," the "Wolf" opened fire upon the sailer, and she soon began to burn. Explosion after explosion followed from the oil which had been left on the ship, and this, scattered on the surface of the ocean, soon had a vast area of fire, a burning waste, huge tongues of flame darting in all directions. It was an awe-inspiring sight, but as darkness was setting in the "Wolf" judged it safer to leave the locality, since the glare might attract something in the way of a warship, although they seemed to be a scarce commodity just in that neighbourhood. Captain Cameron, of the "Beluga," had his wife and little daughter Anita with him, a charming little girl, who, in course of time, on account of her merry pranks, received the name of "Board Plague" (ship's plague) or "Sunbeam." Anita, who was about 6 years of age, was an everlasting source of pleasure to all on board. She was very soon on the best of terms with all on board. particularly with Paul, a petty officer. She had her nose into every corner of the ship, and so when the ship got into the tropics and the heat increased so that when the men were off duty they would lay about on deck sleeping, Anita would creep up armed with a piece of cotton and tickle them on the nose until they would sneeze violently. In this way she became known as "Board Plague." Her favourite amusement when the ship's band was playing, was to get her "darling Paul" to lift her up and put her head in the bell of the big bass instrument. Certainly the little girl plagued everyone on board and made life at the same time much more endurable.

* * *

Speaking of Captain Cameron, of the "Beluga," as he had his wife and child with him when the vessel was captured, I may say that the party was at once taken to another part of the ship. They were kept apart from us, and I, therefore, never once had an opportunity to speak to him.

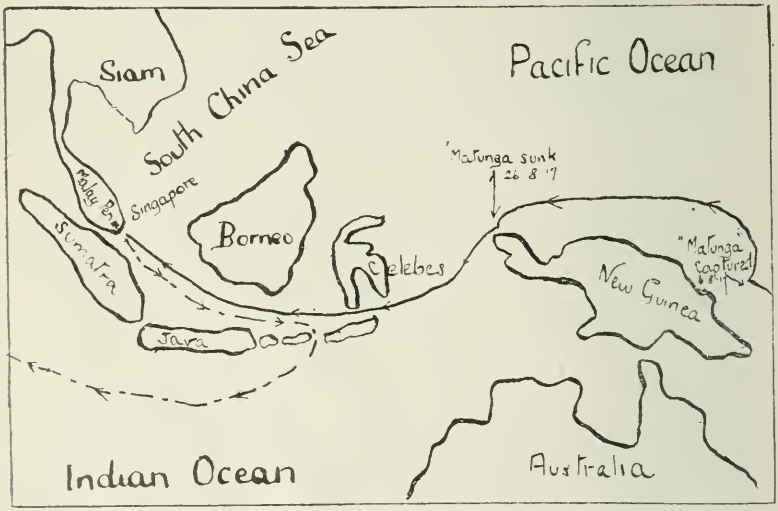
The latitude of Hunter Island was the scene of the next capture, the fine American schooner "Encore" being the next lamb to fall into the clutches of this ever-ravenous wolf in sheep's clothing. The "Encore" was timber laden from Puget Sound for Sydney, and was in command of Captain Oleson. Bad weather delayed the transferring of stores from the "Encore," but at the first opportunity this was done. Also, of course, the crew came over, and helped to increase the number of guests at the "Hotel Kaiserhof," as the prisoners facetiously called the raider. After this the American was well drenched with oil and set alight, and soon burnt out. The "Wolf" now made her way out around Fiji, and hoped to pick up a suitable fast collier. Of course, it was necessary that the collier should be fully loaded. The "Wolf" could take her along and bunker whenever the opportunity offered.

* * *

On 27th of July we found ourselves (says Nerger) still in the neighbourhood of Fiji. The next day we intercepted a wireless to Rabaul, reading, "Burns, Philp, Rabaul, Donaldson, left Sydney on 27th, via Newcastle, Brisbane, 340 tons general cargo, 500 tons Westport coal Rabaul, 236 tons general cargo Mandang, signed Burns." Who was Donaldson? We puzzled over the matter until we intercepted another wireless. "29th July, 8 p.m., steamer 'Matunga' to Brisbane. Arrive Cape Moreton noon Monday." Now we had the solution of our puzzle, as Donaldson could only be the captain of the "Matunga." Calculating the probable speed of the steamer we concluded that about the 5th of August would bring him in sight.

Every day the seaplane was put in commission to inform us of the approach of any ship, but with no result. On the 5th of August, just as the seaplane reached deck a wireless came through. "Captain Donaldson to Burns, Philp, Rabaul. Arrive 2 a.m. Tuesday. Arrange Burrows coal direct." Burrows! Who was that Burrows? We knew only one Burrows, an American destroyer being named that way, and we made sure it was this boat that was referred to.

Our position required some consideration. The "Matunga" was close by, and would be in our hands next morning. We turned round and steamed slowly towards her. Sure enough, late at night her lights came clearly in sight. We were exactly where we should be to intercept her, and on the approach of daylight she was in our hands. It turned out ultimately that Burrows was the captain of the former German yacht "Komet," now stationed at Rabaul, and renamed by the English "Una."



This sectional map indicates the approximate position of the capture and also the sinking of the "Matunga," the continuance of the outward voyage to Singapore, where mines were laid, and the start of the return journey. The large map in the back of the book is, of course, much more comprehensive.

Chapter VIII.

THE "MATUNGA" NOW COMES ON THE SCENE.

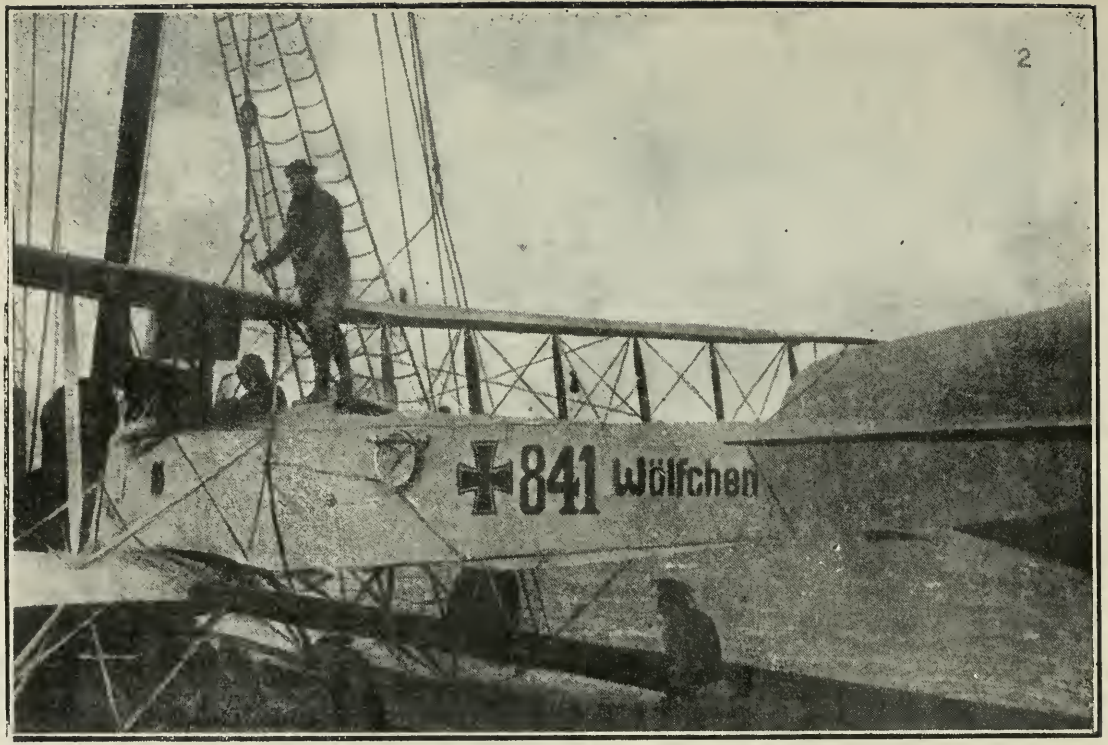
On the afternoon of July 27th, 1917, when I said goodbye to my wife, little did I think that it would be many long weary months before I should see her again, much less anticipate the pleasure of a seven months' cruise on His Germanic Majesty's raider and mine-layer "Wolf," and subsequent imprisonment in various Gefangenenlagers in Germany.

I was due to sail that evening for Rabaul, the capital of German New Guinea (now held by Australian forces), via Newcastle and Brisbane, and was due back in Sydney again in less than a month. My ship, the s.s. Matunga, of the well known Burns, Philp line, was a most comfortable and seaworthy craft, and the naval authorities at Sydney had informed me that morning that all was clear in the Pacific. So there appeared little for me to worry about other than the comfort of my passengers. In this respect, however, the Naval Intelligence Department was a long way out in their knowledge which will be evident presently. I called at the office of the company on my way to the wharf, in case there was any change in my itinerary, but nothing fresh having cropped up, I went down to the ship. As usual, on sailing day, several firemen were missing, they were up having a parting drink with their pals before closing time at 6 p.m. The second engineer was buzzing round the various hotels in Sussex Street, Sydney, mustering them up, and at 7 p.m., all being aboard, we cast off, negotiated Pyrmont Bridge safely, and steaming down the Harbour, cleared the Heads at 8 p.m. We entered Newcastle at daylight the following morning, and after completing bunkers, we proceeded up the coast to Brisbane. On the

evening of 29th July I sent a wireless message to Brisbane informing my company's office that I would be off Cape Moreton at noon next day, never for a moment thinking that a German raider was picking up that message. We duly arrived at Pin-

Capt. MacIntosh, Capt. Laycock, Capt. Donaldson, Capt. Caines—captured with the "Matunga." The military officers were returning to Rabaul after spending furlough in Australia.

kenba on the evening of the 30th, and after embarking mails and passengers sailed again at 10 p.m for Rabaul. The passengers were mostly military officers and men of the Rabaul Garrison returning. They were Colonel Strangman, Major and Mrs. Flood, Captains Cain, MacIntosh and Laycock, together with Warrant-Officer W. O. Kennedy, and fourteen soldiers. Among the civilians aboard were Messrs. McNally, Noble, and Green, who were interested in large cocoa-



The seaplane "Wolfchen," meaning little wolf. The picture shows how she was hoisted overboard into the sea from the deck of the "Wolf."

nut plantations on Bougainville, and were on their way up for an inspection of their property. We had a fine trip during the next few days and nothing worthy of note occurred. The passengers amused themselves with shuffle-board tournaments and other deck games during the day, and at night Messrs. McNally, Noble, and Green kept us lively with music and singing.

On the evening of Sunday, August 5th, just before dinner I sent a wireless message to my company, Messrs. Burns, Philp, Ltd., Rabaul, as follows:— "Arrive 2 a.m. Tuesday, arrange Burrows coal direct, Donaldson." Amongst my cargo was 500 tons of best Westport coal for H.M.A.S. "Una," and in order to avoid delays I wanted to arrange for Commander Burrows to bring the "Una" alongside on my arrival so that I could proceed to work both coal and general cargo.

About 8 p.m. that evening the passengers commenced singing hymns, and I told them it was most unlucky to sing hymns aboard ship, because something was sure to happen. Of course I was only joking with them, but in the light of after events they began to think there might be something in what I had said. At 11 p.m. that same night we picked up a war warning wireless, sent from Woodlark Island, advising all clear in the Pacific—rather funny when the "Wolf" was lying within sixty miles, having already operated to some purpose in Australian waters. However, we knew nothing of that, and believed what Woodlark advised, turning into bunks without a thought of German raiders, floating mines, enemy seaplanes, or other menace of Hun ingenuity.

The morning of August 6th dawned, a date which all aboard the "Matunga" will remember for many a year to come. The weather did not look very promising, since there were numerous rain squalls about. Shortly after daylight my chief officer, Mr. McBride, observed the smoke of a steamer away broad on the port beam, that was to the westward of us. He thought she was the s.s. "Morinda," one of our own vessels, also running to Rabaul, via British New Guinea ports, and naturally did not trouble to report to me. At 6.45 my steward brought up my morning tea, after which I turned out

for my bath. Mr. McBride then told me that the "Morinda" was in sight to the westward. I doubted this, because according to her roster the "Morinda" should have been sailing from

Lieut. Stein and Pilot Fobek, who made the many flights in the "Wolfchen," which were of such material assistance in filling the "bag" of the "Wolf."

Rabaul that day, on her return voyage. I went up on the bridge, and had a look through my glasses at the stranger, and soon saw it was not the "Morinda," as McBride thought. Although at this time her hull was not quite above the horizon, still the placing of the stranger's masts and funnel were suffi-

cient for me. I had brought the "Morinda" out on her maiden voyage from Home, and knew every peculiarity about her. I put the stranger down as a Japanese merchantman, because we had on previous trips passed Japanese steamers on this route from Australia to Japan, and we were well aware of the frequency with which they were trading to our country during these war times.

I went down and had my bath, and on my way back met several of my passengers, who were discussing the vessel in sight, and who asked what I thought it was. I told them it was probably a Jap., but remarked jokingly that it might be an enemy raider. On getting to the bridge I could see that the other ship was steering about three points more to the northward than we, and was closing in on us gradually, just the course to take her well clear of the south end of New Ireland, so I went on with my morning toilet. I had just finished shaving when the chief officer reported that the vessel was keeping away from us. This seemed queer to me, because if she had any speed at all she could easily have crossed our bows. However, about five minutes later she straightened up on her previous course, and I had another look at her through the glasses, and fancied she had the appearance of a Japanese auxilliary cruiser which had been in Rabaul about eighteen months before. So I ordered my chief officer to hoist our ensign and get the other fellow to show his colours, but as she closed in on us again I began to have my doubts, her build altering my opinion as to her being owned by the Japanese.

Closer observation soon convinced me that she was undoubtedly a German built vessel, but whether one of the interned Germans I could not say. However, we were not left long in doubt, because, having closed in upon us, the stranger now hoisted two signals. The chief officer went to the chart-room to read the signals from the signal-book as I made them out with the glass. The first was, "Telegraphic communication stopped." I knew then we were up against a German raider. The second signal was, "Stop instantly." The chief officer immediately jumped to the telegraph and put it over

to stop, but I put it full-ahead again, remarking that we would make them waste a shot at least. I told the chief to call all hands and clear away the boats, but he had hardly left the bridge before the German naval ensign floated to the stranger's mainmast head and bang came a shot across our bows. As I had nothing to reply with and, moreover, had women aboard, I deemed it advisable to stop. I went to the wireless room and asked the operator if he could send an S.O.S. out, but there was no current on, and this was, therefore, impossible, so I gave him all my codes and wireless instructions to take down and have burnt in the furnaces.

Had we been able to get a wireless message out it would have been jammed, because, as we found out afterwards, the "Wolf," for such was the stranger, had a very powerful wireless set, which would have been able to render our messages useless, and anyhow, there was no effective help nearer than Sydney. The "Una," which was at Rabaul, was only a slim built yacht, with very light guns, and the "Wolf" would have blown her out of the water in a few minutes. Hearing a buzzing overhead I looked up and there was a seaplane, the "Wolfchen." Although she had been in the air since 6 o'clock that morning, and had, according to information which we received later, located the "Matunga" hours before, this was the first time we had seen her. A pretty sight she made flying overhead as peaceful as a bird, but it would have been prettier to me had she been painted with our rings of red, white, and blue, instead of the black cross of the Germans.

Chapter IX.

"GOOD MORNING, CAPTAIN DONALDSON."

I did not anticipate that the raider, being so far from his base, would take any prisoners aboard, and so expected him to sink the "Matunga" and let us make the best of our way to land in our boats. Therefore, I gave orders for the boats to be provisioned, and our motor launch to be put over the side with a good stock of benzine aboard, so that she could tow the boats. The nearest land, New Britain, was then only about 70 miles distant.

The "Wolf" now lay about a mile away from us, so there was no chance of us ramming her. The seaplane meanwhile circled over the "Matunga" until the raider's launch, with the prize crew, were on their way towards us. She then landed gracefully on the water close to the "Wolf," and was taken aboard.

The prize crew, fully armed, now boarded us, and the officer in charge, Lieutenant Rosa, came on the bridge, saluted, and said "Good morning, Captain Donaldson." Ye gods! To be addressed by name was a bit of a shock to my nervous system, but I managed to return his salute. Before I could make any reply, he went on telling me I was late, that they had expected me the previous day. I was getting more and more bewildered, and when he asked where the 500 tons of Westport coal was stowed, and hoped the general cargo was mostly eatables, I exploded, and asked him "what the devil he knew about the Westport coal." He told me they had picked up a wireless message sent from Sydney to Rabaul giving date of my departure, and full particulars of my cargo, and that they had been waiting for me for three days. He

then ordered me and the officers to be ready to go aboard his vessel in twenty minutes. He did not say "to go aboard the 'Wolf,' " he refused to give the name of his ship.

I got some of my clothes together, and Lieutenant Rosa said I could get the rest of my gear in a couple of days when the "Matunga" would be alongside his ship. So about 9 a.m. a boat was ready to take us across, but before going I asked Lieutenant Rosa to take care of my passengers and see that they were well treated, which he readily promised. From what I heard later on, when the passengers were brought aboard the "Wolf," he certainly carried out my request most handsomely. All the crew and passengers of the "Matunga," with the exception of myself, my three officers, wireless operator, military officers and men, who were put aboard the "Wolf," were left aboard our ship, Colonel Strangman and Major Flood, of the A.M.C., were also left on the "Matunga." On approaching the "Wolf" we could see the poop deck was crowded with prisoners who had, we found later on, been taken off sundry prizes before our advent.

On boarding the "Wolf" I was taken aside by one of the officers, and questioned on all sorts of things, what garrison there was at Rabaul? Was the port fortified? etc., etc. Naturally he did not get the truth. He seemed extremely anxious to find out who or what Burrows was, this man I had mentioned in my wireless the previous night. He suggested that Burrows was the name of the man to whom my coal was consigned, and of course I remarked it was quite possible it was. About an hour later the same officer came along to me and he seemed quite upset. He said I had told him a lie. I remarked that I had probably told him more than one. He said that the "Burrows" was an American destroyer, and asked if our coal was for her. Naturally I said "sure thing, it was," but he didn't seem at all satisfied even then. He then told me he knew New Guinea waters well, having been an officer on the German survey ship "Cormoran," and had assisted in the survey of these waters. He asked after several German residents in Rabaul, and knew them all well.

Meantime Captains Caines, Laycock, and McIntosh had arrived on board the "Wolf," and were being interrogated by some of the other officers. We were then taken aft and had to strip and undergo medical examination by the two doctors, then Lieutenant Wolffe and two other officers of the "Wolf" came along and tried to get some more information from us. Wolffe was a German merchant service officer, and spoke English splendidly, he very kindly relieved me of my binoculars, which I had brought over in my pocket. We were then taken down below and introduced to the prisoners' quarters. The quarters were in the No. 4 'tween decks, and looked anything but comfortable, the decks both overhead and under foot were bare steel, and the ship's sides were bare, except for the usual wooden stringers. It had never been properly washed down since the coal and mines with which the "Wolf" had been loaded when she left Germany, had been removed. However, Lieutenant Von Oswald, who informed me that he was the prison officer, said it was all to be washed out and painted white. Dinner came along just then, and the previous victims of the "Wolf" came down below to join us at the meal. We found that there were nearly 200 prisoners, some had been on board the "Wolf" for 5 months, so an early release for us did not seem at all probable. The dinner consisted of a plate of pea soup, and what looked like brown bread, which on closer inspection proved to be dough, the outside was burnt black, but the inside was quite raw, and moreover, it had dubious greenish streaks through it. However, prisoners could not be choosers, and the pea soup was excellent and reminded me of my old sailing ship days. The afternoon was spent in an examination of our kit by the Germans, they took away all navigation books and instruments, also cameras and binoculars. Our clothes were put into an iron drum and steam blown through them, they evidently thought we Britishers needed disinfecting, at any rate they were not taking any risks.

Chapter X.

INTRODUCING "LITTLE WILLIE."

In the meantime both ships had got under weigh, the "Matunga" being ahead, and were steering to the north-eastward, giving the coast of New Ireland a wide berth. The afternoon was scorchingly hot, with not a breath of air stirring, the sea being like the proverbial mill pond. The poop deck, which was our only place for exercise and air, was covered for about a third of its none too great length, by an old tarpaulin, taken from the s.s. "Wairuna"; this served as an awning, but permission to spread it had to be sought from the bridge, and when we secured the commander's permission, we had to be ready to furl it at a moment's notice if anything was sighted. Tea came along at 5 p.m., and this sumptuous meal consisted of some more of the dough with the emerald hue in it, and tea, of course no milk, and I forget now whether there was sugar that night, probably there was. On this fare I could see myself fast becoming fat and bloated, with nothing to do and no possible means of getting sufficient exercise. When all the prisoners were on deck, there was barely moving room on the small poop deck, hampered as it was, with the dummy hatchway, wheel box and other enemy deceiving gear, and it was certainly very uncomfortable. We found the Germans taking life very seriously, also, indeed, they seemed absolutely devoid of humour, as the following incident will show.

While we were taking the air on the poop deck the German officer in charge of the prisoners was always ready to enter into conversation with the prisoners. This man's name was Lieutenant Von Oswald, and early he was nicknamed "Little Willie," on account of his somewhat distant

resemblance to the German Crown Prince. On our first night aboard "Little Willie" was conversing with the military officers and myself when I asked him to give my compliments to Commander Nerger and request that he send a wireless message to Sydney informing them that we were all safe aboard the "Wolf." Poor "Little Willie" took me quite seriously, and entered into no end of explanations to show that such a message would give the "Wolf's" position away. He could not see that we were pulling his leg, poor youngster. He had never been away from the North Sea before, and had just got his commission, so imagined he was quite a man of experience. We were permitted to remain on deck that night until 10 o'clock, and never shall I forget my first night on board the "Wolf." The heat was bad enough up on deck, but down in the 'tween decks it was Hades. Hammocks were slung, two tiers of them, one over the other, and the atmosphere was as thick as a London fog with tobacco smoke, the perspiration simply running off the mostly naked bodies of the prisoners and making pools on the deck. This was a very great contrast from my own nice airy cabin on the bridge of the old "Matunga," and I certainly knew which was preferable. It was war, however, and we had to make the best of it. We might yet get the best of the "Wolf," for I knew that numerous messages would be dropped over from the "Matunga" during the night, and in all probability would be picked up by any vessel sent out from Rabaul when we failed to arrive there in time.

In connection with the matter of throwing messages overboard to let the world at large know of our whereabouts, a number of exciting incidents occurred. When the "Matunga" was following the "Wolf" after the capture, so soon as night fell the Germans on board commenced a grand carousal on the liquor supplies that we had left behind. With the usual Teutonic thoroughness they soon became intoxicated, and, in fact, many of them were speedily in a state of helplessness. Those of the passengers left behind seized the opportunity to throw numerous messages overboard in tins and bottles,

and the boatswain scratched a message on a lifebuoy and heaved it overboard. From what I subsequently learned, it is now evident to me that if any of those of our people left on board had known anything of navigation, they could have overpowered the prize crew easily, and made off with the ship

The "Matunga" as she lay in Pirate Cove (New Guinea). It was here the Germans plundered her of all they valued prior to taking her outside to be sunk.

to safety. Had they done this, or had any of their messages been picked up, there may have been a different tale to tell; but the Fates decreed otherwise.

Later on, during the months that followed, messages were sent overboard by us, but I have never heard of any of them being picked up. The Germans were particularly active in preventing us consigning these notes to the sea, and tins, bottles and boxes, or in fact anything that floated, was broken and destroyed by them before we could get hold of them. On

one occasion we came near to outwitting their vigilance, but the upsetting of our plans cost Capt. Meadows, of the "Turritella." three days in the lock-up. Someone had, by what extraordinary means I know not, discovered a football among the prisoners' effects, and when off Singapore we formulated a plan to attach a message to it and throw it overboard. The leather cover of the ball was painted with black and white stripes to make it conspicuous bobbing about on top of the waves, and a message describing the "Wolf." her armament, and the position of the minefields she had laid was enclosed in a bottle to be attached to it. Several of us had smuggled the ball on to the after-end of the poop just at nightfall one warm evening, and were ready to blow it up when Capt. Meadows, who had the bottle and the message, came up from below. The captain emerged from our quarters with his pyjamas and a towel in his hands, announcing to all and sundry that he intended to take a bath before turning in. He stood on the deck smoking for a few moments, but when he started to walk towards us two sentries sprang at him, having evidently got wind of the affair. Capt. Meadows, being as strong as an ox, simply carried the two Germans to the side, and with a mighty heave he threw the bottle, message, pyjamas and towel overboard. There was great consternation among the Huns after this, but they did not know what had been hurled over, and could never find out. The Captain, however, they argued, had committed an offence, and he accordingly was sentenced to three days' detention.

Chapter XI.

A SPELL IN "PIRATE COVE."

At noon on the 7th August the "Matunga" had almost dropped out of sight astern, so the "Wolf" stopped and waited for her to come along. On hearing that the "Matunga" could not make better speed unless her tubes were cleaned Nerger ordered them to clean the tubes right away. Both vessels lay stopped until just before sunset, then everything being satisfactorily fixed, we proceeded to the W.N.W., doing about eight knots.

That night we were given permission to sleep on deck, as a start had been made cleaning up our palatial quarters in No. 4 hold. This beautiful spot rejoiced in many names, such as "The Hell Hole," "The Hotel de Luxe," and later the "Occidental and Oriental Hydro."

From the 8th to 13th August, both vessels steered nearly due west, almost right on the equator. During the forenoon of the 13th both ships stopped about eight miles off the land. Our position then being somewhere off the north-west extremity of Dutch New Guinea. The seaplane was launched and made a flight right over the land and up and down the coast. When she returned the "Wolf" steamed straight in for the land with the gunnery lieutenant at the mast-head conning her in.

A narrow passage between two bold headlands was safely negotiated and we found ourselves in a beautiful landlocked bay surrounded by high hills, thickly covered with dense tropical growths of all kinds. The "Wolf" anchored in the middle of the bay, which was about three to four miles long and a good mile in width at its narrowest point.

About half an hour later the "Matunga" was brought alongside, and work commenced taking cargo and coal aboard the "Wolf."

A guard was landed ashore to keep a lookout on the hills overlooking the sea, and every night the motor boat patrolled the narrow entrance to "Pirate Cove," as we named the harbour. When we were on deck we were not permitted to go within six feet of the rail, sentries armed with rifles parading round us all the time. This was to keep us from having any communication with the natives, who used to come off in their canoes.

That night the "Matunga's" crew were brought aboard; also my three civilian passengers. All prisoners were chased below at sunset to spend the night in an atmosphere reeking with the smell of new paint, made thick with tobacco smoke and a temperature bordering on Hades.

Next afternoon some of the junior officers, seeing that a particular sentry, whom we named "Sherlock Holmes," was hovering round trying to hear what was being said, began whispering and pointing to the nearest shore as a good place to swim for. Sherlock Holmes evidently reported to headquarters that the prisoners were going to try to escape. Just before we were sent below for the night, we noticed that the searchlights was being rigged up on the after end of the boat-deck, and also two machine guns were being fixed in position to command our end of the ship. About 11 p.m. we were awakened by a shot fired on our deck and heard the sentry clambering up on deck shouting at the top of his voice.

We jumped out of our hammocks to find out what was wrong, when suddenly we heard rifle shots on deck, and on looking up through the solitary hatch that was off, we could see beams of the searchlight sweeping our end of the ship and star rockets going up by the dozen. Next minute the machine-guns opened fire, and for five minutes things were pretty lively. Then the German officers came running along fully armed and looking as scared as bandicoots, cursed and raved and ordered us to muster for roll-call. On completing the roll-call and finding no prisoners missing, they looked very sheepish and ordered us back to our hammocks.

It transpired later, that on the report of "Sherlock Holmes," they expected us to break out, and the alarm was to be a shot. The sentry down among the prisoners got nervous, and seeing someone crawling under the hammocks (you had to crawl to get anywhere, after the hammocks were slung) immediately "got the wind up" and fired his revolver.

Luckily no one was hurt, but the after ropes between the two ships, were cut to shreds by the machine-gun fire.

The gods were very good to us during our thirteen days' stay at Pirate Cove. Regularly every afternoon we had a glorious downpour of rain, and so could catch water to bathe and wash our clothes with.

The bay seemed to be well inhabited with crocodiles, as we saw several swimming around, so it was not an ideal spot for trying to escape by swimming ashore.

The work of discharging the "Matunga" went on slowly. Every bit of cargo, except the benzine and kerosene, was taken on board the "Wolf," also all the coal, both cargo and bunkers. The divers were also busy. All the time during our stay here, they were down scraping and cleaning the "Wolf's" bottom.

On the morning of Sunday, the 26th August, we were permitted to remain on deck to see the torpedo practice. They made very good shooting, being considerably more expert with the torpedoes than they were with the 5.9 inch guns.

At 10 a.m. the "Matunga" proceeded to sea, closely followed by the "Wolf." About twelve miles off land both ships stopped, and Lieutenant Dietrich, the mining officer, and his crew went on board to fix their bombs. At 1.30 p.m. the first bomb exploded in the port side of the engine-room bilge, and the ship settled quickly by the stern with a heavy list to port. At 1.32 p.m. the second bomb went; it was placed under the water at the after end of No. 2 hatch. The ship gradually straightened up with the after deck awash, and at 1.37 p.m. she went down stern first, her bow cocked well in the air. My feelings were anything but cheerful, for I was very fond of the old "Matunga."

Shortly before we left Pirate Cove the three horses we had on board the "Matunga" were slaughtered to provide fresh meat. This, of course, did not appeal to the British, indeed a good deal of sentiment attached to the animals, but this had to give way to the need of those aboard for fresh meat. Some of the Germans who were familiar with horse flesh as a food were jubilant at the thought of this change of diet, but those unacquainted with it were highly indignant. The subsequent happenings in connection with this item in the menu are humorously told by Nerger himself in his record of the voyage:—"The ship's officers' mess was directly underneath my cabin, and the appearance of the meat course was followed by a violent stamping and galloping by those present. This was meant to be a reflection upon the horse-flesh. To get even with these recalcitrant officers, I gave orders to the cooks and stewards that no mention of horse-flesh was to be made to the officers and no indication given as to the days upon which it was served. Upon one day the cooks served mock hare, whereon the stamping and galloping again occurred, ending in a wild tumult, officers shouting 'Horse-flesh we do not eat.' None of the mock hare was eaten by any of them. Two days later the cooks produced a favourite German dish, sauer braten (savory roast with an acid taste) from the horse-flesh, and I ordered that it be served as roast beef. 'Sauer braten,' exclaimed the officers, 'is certainly not horse-flesh,' and they enjoyed it hugely, not an atom being left after the meal. Afterwards they were told that it was horse-flesh, and it was a very hard job to convince them of the fact."

The "Matunga" as she appeared before the final plunge on 26.8.'17. The Germans put two bombs in the holds of the ship, and seven minutes after the first explosion she went down.

Chapter XII.

A MINEFIELD FOR SINGAPORE.

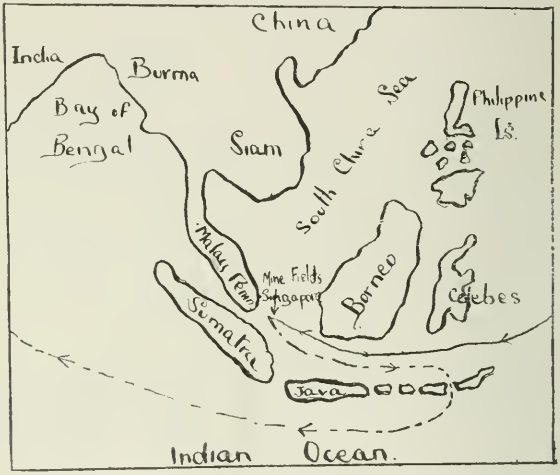
The "Wolf" now steamed away to the south-west, and the Germans told us that they were now going to carry out the most ticklish part of the whole cruise. We at once jumped to the conclusion that Singapore was now to receive attention. She still had fully one-hundred mines left. These systematically laid around the entrance to Singapore, would do considerable damage to shipping in the East.

The seaplane was dismantled, and stowed away down in No. 3 'tween decks, so that there was nothing about the "Wolf" to cause any suspicion to passing vessels. She proceeded at her usual cruising speed of eight knots, through the numerous islands of the Celebes.

On August 30th, about 4.30 p.m., we passed about four miles south of the lighthouse on the Braile Bank, and so into the Java Sea. Here the speed was increased, and I think she was doing her best, possibly 10½ or 11 knots. For although the divers had spent a lot of time cleaning her bottom at Pirate Cove, still they never got right under her; she was only cleaned to the round of the bilge. So that there was still a large patch of grass and shell-covered surface to push through the water, also one boiler was in a very dicky condition.

During the night on September 3rd, a beautiful moonlight night, the "Wolf" was steaming up Karimatta Straits, no lights showing from anywhere, and all eyes alert for anything in the way of hostile cruisers. Suddenly a suspicious-looking craft was sighted. Immediately the alarm bells went, and we could hear all hands tumbling out hurriedly to battle

stations. Everyone was pitched to the highest key of excitement, for the approaching vessel was made out to be a cruiser. The Germans said she was one of our "Juno" class. Everything was ready. Should the cruiser see the "Wolf" and signal for any particulars from her, at once two torpedoes



This small sectional map shows the route pursued by the "Wolf" after she sunk the Matunga Singapore marks the end of the outward voyage. From thence the "Wolf" proceeded to hit the return trail. The large map in the back of the book includes this section.

would have been launched at her. However, Nerger's luck held good, for either the cruiser did not see her at all, or else considered it not worth while to take any notice of her. She passed the "Wolf" within three miles, and went her way, little suspecting that a German raider and mine-layer had slipped by on such a fine clear night.

The following night 4th September, "Mines," as we called Lieutenant Dietrich, and his crew had a busy time. At 7 p.m. they commenced getting the mines up from No. 3 hold. They were run along the deck, on rails properly fixed for them, and run into sidings under the poop. Here the rails ran out to the ship's side, where the mine dropping doors were. Each mine rumbled right over our heads and we could hear the splash as they dropped.

The "Wolf" kept at full speed all the time while laying the minefield. At 11 p.m. the first mine was dropped, and from then they went merrily at about 2½ minute intervals. The number of mines laid that night was a source of great argument among the prisoners. Some said they counted 106, others 99, and so on, but I think somewhere about 100 would not be far wrong. Personally, I did not argue, as after counting five, I fell asleep and did not waken until I heard the subdued cheer, given by the mining crew when the last mine had been dropped.

As soon as the last mine was gone, the "Wolf" turned on her tracks and made back for the Java Sea. The Germans had "the wind up" properly, for several times next morning, the alarm bells went and they tumbled out hurriedly to battle stations. Once while we were on deck the alarms went, and we were hustled unceremoniously below. They thought they saw an aeroplane coming out over the land, but it proved to be a bird.

That day the topmasts were lowered and the funnel raised, this completely altering her outward appearance. From a vessel with long topmasts and a moderate funnel, she was now a stumpy masted tramp with a fairly high funnel.

She continued back in about the same track that she had come, right along the Java Sea, passing steamers every day, but taking no notice of them. It was much too risky to molest shipping in these enclosed waters.

On Sunday evening, 9th September, she entered the Atlas Straits, between the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa, and passed through during the night into the Indian Ocean. She continued due south until 9 a.m. the following morning, and then hauled to the westward, in about latitude 10 S. Now followed a long spell of inactivity, and here I propose to give my readers some idea of our life on board the "Wolf."

Chapter XIII.

CONDITIONS IN THE "HOTEL DE LUXE."

As I have already mentioned, our quarters were situated in the No. 4 'tween decks, the only means of entrance and exit being through a small hatchway under the poop, and by means of a wooden ladder, with only room for one to pass at a time. The quarters were roughly 65 feet long and 45 feet wide, and the sides, deck and ceiling were all steel. It was partitioned off by the erection of a double tier of empty store cases, these empty cases being our wardrobe, as we had nowhere else to keep our things. In the port after corner dwelt the captains, chief officers, and chief engineers, in a space measuring 25 feet by 18 feet. Forward of this were the junior officers, engineers, and apprentices. Amidships, at the forward end, was the "neutrals'" territory, and the remaining space was occupied by the crew.

We had portable mess tables and benches. These, of course, had to come down at night time, to make room for the hammocks. The hammocks were slung in double tiers, one over the other, and so close together that one usually had to get in at the end and crawl down. The hatchway overhead measured about 20 feet by 14 feet, but during the night we were never permitted to have more than one hatch open, this gave us a five by two air space, but should anything heave in sight, then everything was covered and the hatch battened down.

There was always at least one armed sentry down below, and three or four more at the top of the ladder. When capturing a vessel or laying mines, a steel plate was dropped over the exit, the guard doubled, and a nice little box of hand grenades ready, in case we tried to get out.

Our position, previous to getting rid of the mines, was sort of between the devil and the deep sea, had she gone into action. Just forward to our quarters were the mines, while just abaft us was the after magazine full of ammunition. A shot striking the "Wolf" anywhere abaft her engine-room meant that the majority of us went west "one time."

Photo. of some of the prisoners on the "Wolf," showing the varied nationalities. Many of these men were aboard the "Wolf" upwards of twelve months. A number of the "Matunga" complement are shown in this group.

At 6 o'clock every morning we each received about two inches of fresh water in the bottom of a bucket, with this we had to bath ourselves and wash our clothes. I tell you it took some doing, especially when there was a fresh wind blowing. We had to get right up on the poop to bathe, and it was so crowded up there that half the time you did not know whether you were soaping yourself or the fellow next to you.

When you finished this feat and started to get below to dress you were sure to get smothered in dirty water and soapsuds, squeezing your way through this naked mass to the ladder. The only deck we were allowed to use was the poop, and this was so hampered with hatchways, ventilators, a dummy wheel box, and a 5.9 inch gun, that when any more than half of us were on deck at once, there was no room to take exercise of any kind.

When on deck there were always three armed sentries with us, and another always had the telephone apparatus to the bridge, on his head. There were telephones from each gun, and each torpedo tube to the bridge.

A masthead lookout was always kept, and immediately anything was sighted the cry of "Alle gefangenen unter deck" (all prisoners under deck) was given, and down below we were hustled, hoping each time that it was a British cruiser coming along.

They were continually practicing torpedo and gun drill, and every day the guns and torpedoes were cleaned. During all these little diversions we were kept down below. A fan was fixed up down below, which would perhaps work for two nights, and then be off duty for repairs, until the poor overworked electrician had a minute to spare to fix it. But even when the fan did work the temperature in the tropics down below was pretty moist.

How we all managed to keep so fit was marvellous. The food was at times pretty bad and at other times quite good. Our menu depended on the class of ship captured, if it was a well found vessel, then we all fared well and vice versa.

Perhaps one of the things most greatly missed by a number of us was the regular exercise to which we had always been accustomed. On the overcrowded deck space allotted to us it was almost impossible to carry out our usual practices in this direction, but towards nightfall, when there was less congestion, a few of us would manage a brisk walk round and about, with some difficulty and often amusing consequences. Captain Saunders, who fortunately had a good know-

ledge of the "physical jerks" that military recruits go through in camp, took classes in hand, and when opportunity offered we went through the lessons in good order. This, I think, helped us a good deal in keeping healthy and well.

Our other amusements were limited indeed. There were fortunately numerous packs of cards on board, and we played every game we knew night after night in our quarters. For the most of the time we had the electric light, but on occasions when there was a scare among the Germans, or when they thought it wise to take precautions against being sighted, the globes were shaded, and playing became impossible.

It was a comforting thing to those of us that smoked to have a reasonable supply of tobacco. We were given an allowance of half a pound per month, and sometimes could secure a little more. The tobacco came from the captured prizes, and there was always plenty until near the end of the voyage. Then the shortage was acute, and up among the ice-fields we were on short commons, and often would have paid anything for a plug of the fragrant weed.

We now spent a very monotonous sixteen days, cruising slowly to the westward. It was evident that the Germans did not want to get back to the vicinity of Ceylon, until the south-west monsoon had finished, and fine weather again prevailed there. Many were the conjectures of the prisoners during those hot sleepy days. Some of us thought that now he had finished his mines, he would send us off at the first suitable opportunity. Christmas Island, we thought would be a suitable place to land us on, as we knew the communications between there and Singapore were very irregular. However, we passed the longitude of that island, and were still in a quandary as to what was to be done with us.

The German officers said that we would not be long before we would be sent in, but I don't think Commander Nerger ever took anyone into his confidence in these matters, and he personally changed his mind about things so often, that one never knew what to expect next.

Chapter XIV.

CAPTURE OF THE "HITACHI MARU."

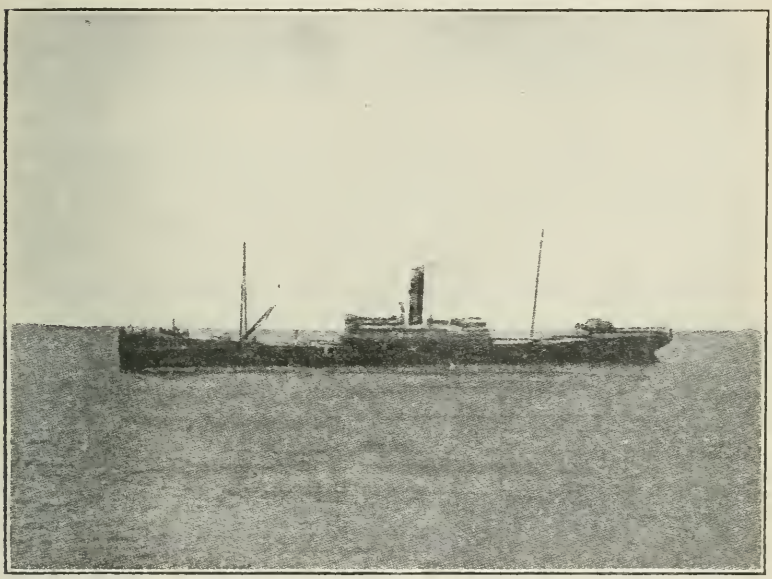
On the morning of September 26th we were somewhere near the One and a Half Degree Channel, through the Maldive Islands.

The seaplane was again brought up on deck and assembled. This operation usually occupied about 2½ hours. About 11 a.m., just a few minutes after they had got the engine of the seaplane working, smoke was sighted to the eastward. The "Wolf" immediately stopped, put the seaplane into the water, and a few minutes later the latter buzzed into the air and disappeared in the direction of the smoke. She returned about noon, and all was hustle to get her on board. The commander himself came on the after end of the boat deck, and yelled, cursed, and danced like a madman until the seaplane was on board.

The "Wolf" then went off full speed to west-south-west. We were shaking hands with ourselves and were sure the long-looked-for cruiser was now on the "Wolf's" heels. However, at 1.30 p.m. our hopes were again dashed to pieces, for the "Wolf" again stopped, sent the seaplane up, and turned round and steamed back towards the smoke, which could now be plainly seen from the deck.

The "Wolf" approached the other steamer on a parallel course. When within about 1½ miles of her she signalled "stop immediately, telegraphic communication stopped," and a warning shell was fired across her bows. The other vessel hoisted his answering pennant, signifying that he understood, and also blew three short blasts on his whistle, indicating that

he was coming full-speed astern. Nevertheless, he swung round on the starboard helm, without reducing his speed, and turned his stern towards the "Wolf." The "Wolf" could now see that he carried a gun aft; it was previously hidden from them by the awning over the after deck, and the gun's crew were starting to clear away the gun. The "Wolf" dropped all her bulwarks and showed her set of teeth, at the same time



S.s. "Hitachi Maru," a Jap. mail steamer well known in Australian ports. A vessel of about 7,000 tons, she carried, when captured, a cargo valued at considerably over £1,000,000.

sent another shot across the bows of the Jap. For by this time they had seen that she was the Japanese steamer "Hitachi Maru."

As the Jap. still refused to stop, the "Wolf" shelled the after deck, and one shell burst among the gun's crew of the Jap., but still she kept on going, and a fresh crew rushed to man the gun. The "Wolf" kept up a steady fire with her 5.9 inch guns, and at that close range it certainly reflected no

credit on the gunners that so little damage was done to the Jap. When the shells started to burst around the decks, several of the Japs. jumped overboard. The seaplane now took a hand in the game, and dropped a bomb into the water ahead of the "Hitachi Maru" and she stopped. Boats were hurriedly lowered from the Jap. with the latter's passengers aboard. One of the boats dropped into the water end-on, and it was a marvel to everyone that so few were drowned.

While the prize crew were on the way across, the Jap. commenced using his wireless, and at once the "Wolf" put a shell right through her wireless room. This shell went clean through both sides of the wireless house, and the operator, seated in his chair, was unhurt. The shell exploded against one of the engine-room ventilators, killing one of the engineers who happened to be standing there, and also burst up the funnel.

Boats were lowered from the "Wolf," and picked up several people who were swimming in the water. Among those picked up in the water was a young Britisher, a passenger on the "Hitachi Maru," who happened to have been on the R.M.S. "Mongolia" when that fine vessel struck one of the "Wolf's" mines off Bombay, so he evidently was not born to be drowned.

The passengers and crew of the "Hitachi Maru" now came on board the "Wolf." Some of the former had been injured in the process of lowering their boats. There were several British women passengers, who certainly must have had some nasty shocks to their nervous systems, but next morning they showed no signs of the terrible ordeal through which they had passed. Most of them spent the night in deck chairs on the after well-deck of the "Wolf."

The steering gear of the Jap. had been damaged by the gunfire, and a gang of men were sent over from the "Wolf" to repair it. At 8 p.m., the damaged steering gear having been repaired, both ships proceeded south at slow speed.

Next morning both vessels steamed in among the Maldive Islands. The "Hitachi Maru" anchored, and the "Wolf"

went alongside her and made fast. All the "Hitachi Maru" passengers were now sent aboard, likewise the Jap. stewards and cooks. Work was immediately started, taking over cargo and coal from the Jap. She had a very valuable cargo aboard, and was bound from Japan to Liverpool, via Singapore, Colombo and Delagoa Bay. This vessel at least had reached Singapore from the north without striking the "Wolf's" mine-field. This puzzled the Germans somewhat.

We were able to see some of the effects of the gunfire on the Jap. The after-deck round the gun and the deck under it were covered with blood. One shell had burst just under the boat-deck, upon which the gun was mounted, and had burst up the deck around the gun, but the gun was absolutely undamaged. Another shell had holed her just above the water-line at No. 4 hatch; another caught her under the port counter, exploded in the second-class bath rooms; and the one, already mentioned, which went through the wireless room. Altogether the "Wolf" fired fifteen shots, and these at practically point blank range, so the gunnery was far from good. The Jap. had not fired a single shot. The gun she carried was a fine 4.7 inch gun, and while part of the crew were busy with cargo, another crowd dismantled the Jap.'s gun and took it aboard the "Wolf."

We were not allowed to communicate in any way with the Japs., who were accommodated in No. 3 'tween decks. Captain Tominaga, of the "Hitachi Maru," and his officers were also housed in No. 3.

Captain Tominagu kept very much to himself, and was not quartered amongst us. He felt the loss of his ship keenly, more especially on account of the fact that so many of his crew had been killed. Eventually up amongst the ice-floes of the Aretic he slipped over the side, and was not missed until it was too late to return and search for him.

Altogether there were thirteen deaths over this capture, eleven by gunfire and two by drowning. Had the "Hitachi

Maru'' realised in time what manner of ship the ''Wolf'' was, she could have given the ''Wolf'' a bad time, as she was capable of getting up a speed of 15 knots. However, the captain had been informed in Colombo that there was nothing to fear until he got into the U-boat area, and naturally he had no suspicion that the vessel approaching him was anything but a peaceful merchantman.

The Jap.'s cargo was of great variety. Rubber, copper, tin, hides, tea, and silk were the main things the ''Wolf'' devoured, but I must not forget the canned crab. Ye gods, I never want to see a beastly crab in my life again, much less eat one. After the Jap.'s capture I think we had canned crab for every blessed meal; in fact, I quite anticipated that if we ever did get ashore again we should all be walking sideways.

Amongst the Jap.'s passengers were a number of young Britishers, going home to join up. In the second-class there was a Chinese woman and child, a Hindu woman, five Portuguese soldiers, and several Indians going to the Cape. Luckily the women in the saloon all had their husbands with them.

The women passengers on the ''Hitachi Maru'' must have had some exciting experiences. They were kept on the ship during the period she was in attendance on the ''Wolf,'' and were afterwards transferred to the ''Igotz Mendi'' after her capture. On this ship they continued their unpleasant voyage, and were still aboard when the vessel reached the Danish coast. How they fared or what became of them I have never learned.

Only 200 tons of coal were taken from the ''Hitachi Maru,'' as Nerger intended to take this fine ship home to Germany with him, but in case of accidents he took as much of her cargo on board the ''Wolf'' as she could hold. Also the holes in the Jap.'s hull were repaired, and the holes in the funnel plated over.

Both ships lay in this anchorage for five days, within 600 miles of Colombo, where there were two British cruisers lying when the ''Hitachi Maru'' left.

Numerous native boats came off. Some came alongside the "Wolf" and sold fruit, but others kept their distance, and seemed very dubious of her, especially when they saw the seaplane.

All the womenfolk were put on board the "Hitachi Maru," also all prisoners over sixty years of age and under sixteen.

At daylight on the 3rd October the "Wolf" cast off from the Jap., and proceeded to sea, leaving a prize crew of fifteen men under command of Lieut. Rosa, and a number of neutrals, who volunteered to work the ship for the Germans.

Chapter XV.

THE SINKING OF THE "HITACHI MARU."

The hunt was now for coal, as without this commodity there was no hope of taking the Jap. along with them. The ground chosen was somewhere just east of the Equatorial Channel, and under easy steam the "Wolf" cruised slowly east and west, north and south, across the usual shipping tracks.

During the night of 5th October a vessel was sighted, with all her lights burning brightly. This vessel the "Wolf" found out by judicious use of her Morse light to be a Dane; I think she was the "Zealandia." So intent were they in watching the Dane that they failed to notice the approach of another vessel, without any lights showing, which came up on the starboard quarter of the "Wolf." When this second vessel was suddenly seen great commotion was caused on the "Wolf." "Prepare for action" alarms went and torpedo doors were dropped with a thunderous bang. They thought she was a British auxiliary cruiser, and when the vessel suddenly hauled sharp across the "Wolf's" stern they made sure the game was up. However, even then they funked opening an action. Their torpedo might miss its mark, and then they would have to fight. This was a thing the "Wolf" did not intend to do, unless of course it was an unarmed merchantman, or one with the usual one gun mounted aft.

However, their fears were soon allayed, for the vessel quickly crossed astern of the "Wolf," and hauled back on her old course again. But the sudden fright had so upset the German equilibrium that she was some miles ahead of them before they realised she would be a valuable prize. Being dark, they did not care to tackle her, as she might have a

gun. So the "Wolf" set after her, trying to keep within range until daylight. The other vessel proved to be too fast for this; at daylight she was well outside the range of the "Wolf's" guns. From what we could see of her when allowed on deck for our bath, she seemed to be a vessel of from 10,000 to 12,000 tons, one funnel and two masts, and was evidently bound for Colombo.

The "Wolf," seeing the chase was useless, eased up her speed, and, as soon as the other ship was out of sight, she turned round and went full speed in the opposite direction, namely, to westward. They evidently thought that the other steamer might have seen the seaplane on deck, and would report her as a suspicious craft to Colombo.

About 5 p.m. we closed in with the Maldive Islands again, and stopped, put the seaplane over, and sent her in with a message to the "Hitachi Maru." On the return of the "Wolfchen" she was whipped on board lively, and the "Wolf" ploughed off again full speed to the west.

For six days we steamed west-south-west, but nothing came within the vision of the hungry "Wolf." On the afternoon of the 12th October the course was altered to about south south east, and at 10 a.m. the following morning we met the "Hitachi Maru." Both ships steered slowly to the southward, and on the evening of the 14th the "Hitachi Maru" left us, steaming even more south.

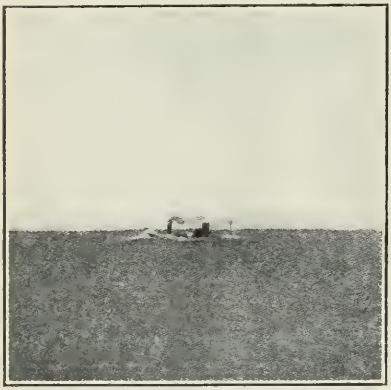
For the next six days the "Wolf" hunted vainly for a prize. She steamed north, then east, then south, and then west, back and forward, across what she considered the steamer tracks, never more than eight hours on the same course, but no sign of shipping could be seen, and the Germans congratulated themselves that, between the "U" boats and the "Wolf" they had quite plainly wiped the British mercantile marine from the seas.

It was quite evident now that the Jap. could not be taken home in triumph. All the coal would be required for the "Wolf" herself, and then it would require strict economy in coal consumption if she was to reach Germany.

On the morning of the 20th we again met the "Hitachi Maru," and both vessels steamed in under the lee of the Gargados reefs. The "Hitachi Maru" anchored, and the "Wolf" moored alongside her.

These reefs are about three hundred miles north-north-east of Mauritius, and afforded an excellent anchorage from the fresh south-east trade winds. They are in about 15 degrees south latitude, and roughly about 60 degrees east longitude. Here we had some good sport fishing from the poop. Some days we had a good haul, other days not a single fish could be caught. Anything that could be used for a line was there, and some of the prisoners manufactured excellent hooks from ordinary nails. The fresh fish was greatly appreciated by prisoners and crew. The German officers offered to buy fish caught by the prisoners, but in most cases prisoners gave them without payment.

Having now decided that the "Hitachi Maru" must be sunk, as it was impossible to take her along without plenty of coal, the crew was started shifting coal from the "Wolf's" No. 3 hold into the bunkers, so as to make room for storage of as much of the "Hitachi Maru's" cargo as possible. While one gang was shifting coal, others were hard at work at the other end of the ship taking over cargo from the Jap.



Snap of the "Hitachi Maru" as she left for her last resting place.

For the next week we had a very cheerful time. The ships were naturally swung head to wind, and this gave us the benefit of all the coal dust that was going. And there was a scarcity of water to wash in. "Little Willie" was approached on the subject of getting an allowance of water in

the evening as well as in the morning, for we did not care to turn in covered in coal dust. "Willie," however, would not listen to our request. Later the request was put before Lieutenant Deitrich, the mining officer, and he went at once to the engineers and got us an allowance of water morning and evening while the coaling went on.

The "Wolf" had now filled up all available space with the Jap.'s valuable cargo, copper was put in the bunkers under the coal, and some of it in the magazines. The storerooms were well stocked, especially with flour and that counfounded canned crab. I should imagine that the Japs. had been collecting crabs for centuries, and sent them all along on the unfortunate "Hitachi Maru."

When supplies were being transferred from captured vessels to the "Wolf," there was always plenty of bustle and hurry. At first we expected that the Germans would compel us to assist, but they did not; the work, for the most part, was always done by their own crew. Some of the neutrals, however, worked, but they were volunteers, and the Germans offered to pay them at the rate of nine shillings a day. Whether they were eventually paid up I could never ascertain.

To accommodate the single men passengers, a room had been made in No. 3 'tween decks, the married couples and the army officers were again housed in the rooms on the saloon deck. Another member was added to the members of the officers' mess, a Japanese lieut.-engineer of the Japanese navy, who was travelling as a passenger.

Having now gorged herself to repletion, the "Wolf" took her victim out to the open sea to destroy her. The "Hitachi Maru" was sunk by bombs on the 7th November about thirty miles north-west of the Gargados reefs. She sank head first, and turned right up on end as she went down. Great quantities of wreckage came to the surface, amongst which the most prominent was the round-topped ammunition house, which was swept off the after boat-deck by the rush of water as the ship went down.

Chapter XVI.

A CONSIGNMENT OF COAL.

During our stay at Gargados, the chief officer told us that we would all either be at home for Christmas or be free to send news home at that time. We surmised this to mean that the "Wolf" had only sufficient coal to reach the Canary Islands, and if unable to replenish her stock before reaching there, would go in and intern. But we knew her luck, and had our doubts.

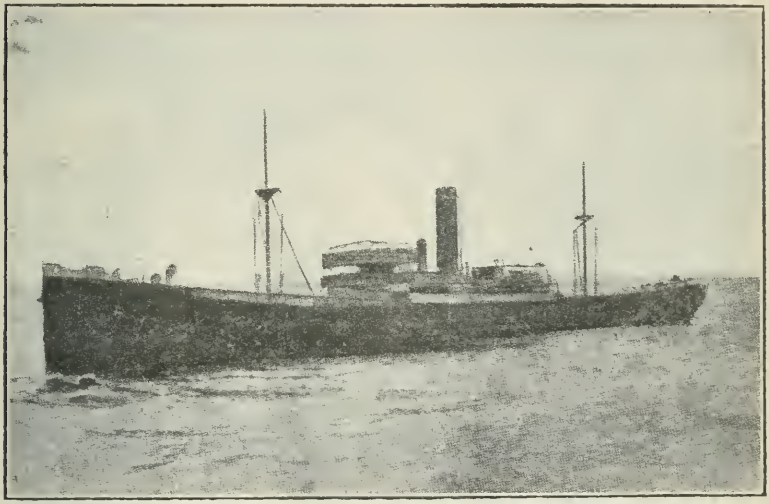
The course was again set to the south-west. Mauritius was passed without incident. At daylight on the 10th November we were awakened by the usual commotion caused by the alarm of "Stations," and immediately guessed that the "Wolf's" marvellous luck had not yet deserted her.

The vessel was captured without a shot having to be fired. When permitted to go on deck, we found the new prize steaming along quietly behind us. She was painted a light grey outside, and had a yellow funnel with the letters A.S. on it. At once some of the prisoners recognised this mark, and said she was one of the "Ally Sloper" line of Bilboa. This she proved to be, although to this day I have been unable to find out what the A.S. really stood for.

The prize, and she was a prize indeed to the "Wolf" (for without her she had no hope of ever reaching Germany again), was the Spanish steamer "Igotz Mendi," with a cargo of 6800 tons of coal, consigned to the British authorities at Colombo. She had loaded her coal at Delagoa Bay. The crew, being Spaniards, and therefore neutral, were left on board to carry

on the working of the ship, and only a small prize crew was placed on board. Both ships turned round and steamed back towards the Gargados Reefs.

The "Wolf" had now got what she had been hunting for so many long months. With this quantity of coal she could take the Spaniard along with her, and replenish her bunkers whenever necessary. Coaling was started immediately the

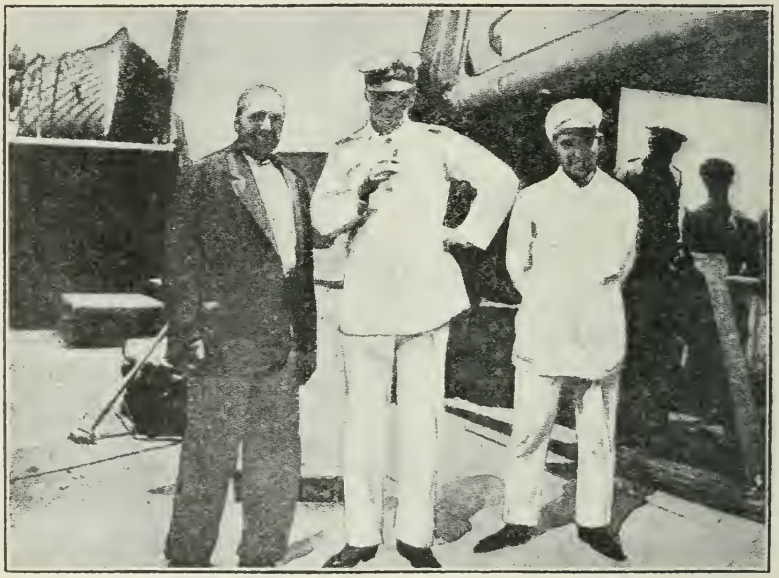


S.s. "Igotz Mendi," a Spanish vessel, which was captured by the "Wolf." She carried a fine cargo of coal, which was a great prize for the German.

"Wolf" was fast alongside the Spaniard, and continued without stoppage night and day until the bunkers could hold no more.

As soon as the "Wolf's" appetite for coal was satisfied, she cast off from the Spaniard and anchored. All hands were then engaged in painting. A gang was sent over to the "Igotz Mendi," and the gay Spaniard's bright colours were hidden under a complete covering of war grey. The "Wolf" was also treated to a coat of paint, but her colour was made much nearer black than grey.

The womenfolk and their husbands were once again shifted. This time they were housed in the rooms of the Spanish officers and engineers, who kindly gave up their quarters, and had some rough accommodation put up for themselves under the poop. A couple of sick prisoners were also put on board the Spaniard, but owing to lack of accommodation those over sixty and under sixteen years of age had to be left on the "Wolf."



Prize Commander Rose, with the Captain and Second Officer of the Spanish ship "Igotz Mendi." It was from this boat that the Germans secured 1000 tons of coal, which enabled them to get back to Germany. The prize was also intended for Germany, but ran ashore on the coast of Denmark.

One night during our stay at Cargados the wireless of a cruiser was picked up not far off. At daybreak the "Wolfchen" was sent up, and returned with the news that a Japanese cruiser was passing about 40 miles to the northward of us, bound west. Everything was got ready for a quick move away, if she should happen to cruise down our way. Axes were placed handy fore and aft to cut away the mooring ropes

between the two ships, and a full head of steam was raised on the "Wolf." But nothing happened. The "Wolfchen" made two more flights that day and one the following morning, but nothing more was seen of the cruiser.

At noon on the 17th November both ships left the anchorage and proceeded to the south-west. At 7 p.m. the "Wolf" turned round and steamed away to the eastward. However, after it was dark and the Spaniard well out of sight, she turned again to about west-south-west.

We now had a very acceptable change of prison officers. Lieut. Dietrich, the chief mining officer, having successfully laid all the "eggs" under his charge, and therefore having nothing particular to do, was appointed to look after us in place of "Little Willie."

We all liked "Mines," as we called him. He was about the only German on board with a sense of humour, and always had a cheery smile for us. No complaint was too trivial for his attention, and our comfort was well looked after when he took charge. We used to look forward to 8 p.m. in the evening, as at this time "Mines" made his pilgrimage into "Hades," and always stayed to have a yarn with us, and see if we had sufficient ventilation for the night. There were now nearly 400 prisoners on board, and although there was a fan for drawing down the cooler air from on deck, and distributing it throughout the quarters by narrow metal channels, still, unless one had the luck to have his hammock slung right under the exit of one of those channels, there was no air stirring. "Mines" would always give orders to have some more hatches taken off, if we asked him—a thing his predecessor would never have done.

Chapter XVII.

FORD'S FOR EVERYBODY.

As the African coast was approached the course was gradually altered to the southward, keeping about 100 miles off shore.

On the morning of the 30th November, blowing a moderate south-east gale, a barque was sighted, head reaching to the southward, under lower topsails and foresail. She was ordered to heave to. With difficulty, and a good drenching, a prize crew boarded her. She was the American barque "John H. Kirby," of New York, bound from that port to Port Elizabeth and Durban. She had a mixed cargo, the principal items being 270 Ford motor cars and a large quantity of canned goods.

Commander Nerger makes the statement that the "John H. Kirby" carried armoured cars for the troops in East Africa, and imagines, I think, that he has saved East Africa by sinking a few Ford Cars, which, by the way, were not armoured, but simply common or garden Fords.

Luck still held, for within an hour of the capture the wind dropped and the sea went down, so that work was commenced boating the stores over to the "Wolf," and this was kept going until sunset. The methods which the Germans adopted to secure the most necessary portions of the cargo or stores of vessels captured show how thoroughly planned was every detail of the cruise. From the ship's papers printed requisition forms were secured by the purser, who filled them in with lists of what he required from the captured vessel. Everything was set out fully, and when the document was completed it was presented formally to the Commander, who

appended with a graceful flourish the bold signature of "C. Nerger." After that the despoilers would commence their ravages. While the stores were being boated from the "John H. Kirby," a deputation of his own officers requested that Captain Nerger would present them all with one of the Ford motor cars each rather than send them to the bottom. Nerger, entering into the joke, granted the request, providing, however, that each man should bring his own car aboard. Needless to relate, Neptune and his satellites are the only ones to enjoy the pleasures of motoring with that shipment of cars. The crew of the "John H. Kirby" were brought on board, and proved to be mostly neutrals. I think there was only one true American on board her. Captain Blom, a Finn, was in command. He said that he was uncertain of his position, as he had only one chronometer on board, and that was broken, and did not know that he was so far past his first port of call until the "Wolf" collared him. At daylight the work of boating cargo over was again commenced, and went on gaily until about 11.30 a.m. Then some disturbing wireless must have been picked up, for the work was stopped suddenly and "Mines" was sent aboard her in a hurry to sink her.

The 'John H. Kirby," snapped as she sunk beneath the waves. Bombs again were employed for the despatch of this vessel, and no difficulty was met in sending her down.

Before the unfortunate barque had gone to her rest below the "Wolf" was off full speed to the westward. We rounded the Cape on the 3rd December, in ideal weather, smooth seas and brilliant sunshine, and so, after a long spell, the "Wolf" again entered the Atlantic, steering about west-north-west. We at once came to the conclusion, which eventually proved correct, that he was making for the Island of Trinidad—not the West Indian island of that name—about 600

miles off the east coast of Brazil, there to have a general overhaul of engines and boilers, replenish bunkers, and be ready for the run through the British blockade area. We knew that, previous to the outbreak of the war, this island was uninhabited, and would suit the "Wolf's" requirements admirably.

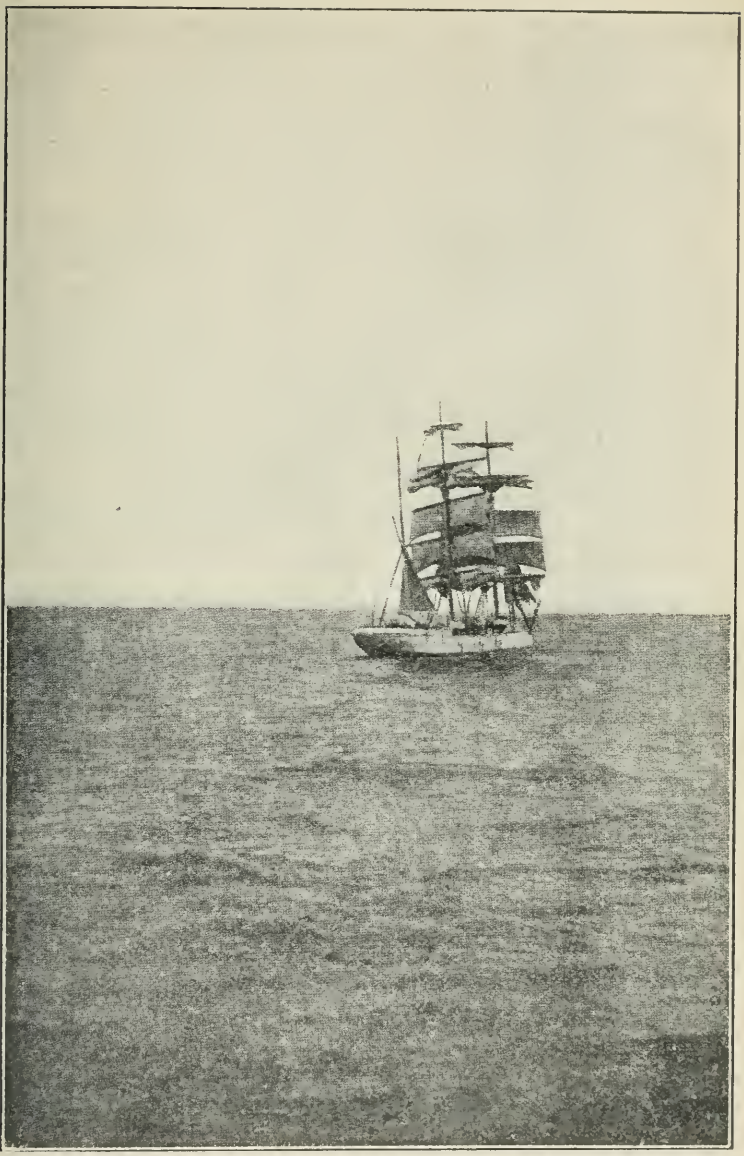
The "Igotz Mendi" was met on the 6th December, and a few boatloads of stores were sent over to her. She kept in company until the following day, and then went off, steering more to the westward than the "Wolf."

The "Wolfchen" was now undergoing repairs, as they had had a bit of an accident with her when landing from the last flight. The sea was choppy at the time, and she struck the water at the wrong angle, and broke one of her floats. This immediately filled with water, and tipped her nose under. Boats were sent to her, and several men had to climb out on the tail while she was towed back alongside. The covering material was by this time quite rotten, and she had to be completely re-covered, and the engine given a thorough overhaul after its immersion in the salt water. Japanese silk from the "Hitachi Maru" was used for covering the wings, and it proved to be excellently adapted to the purpose.

There was also a slight outbreak of typhoid fever among the Japs., and everyone on board was inoculated against the disease. Luckily it did not spread.

We continued in a straight line for Trinidad at a speed of nine knots. This was about the extreme limit of speed which the "Wolf" could now attain; her bottom was covered with shells, and long grass streamed along her waterline.

Just before sundown on the 14th December a barque was sighted steering to the north-east. The "Wolf" was unable to get up to her before dark, so she dodged after her all night, and by 6 a.m. next morning a prize crew was in charge of the barque. This vessel brought along some of our allies, who were not yet represented among the prisoners. She was the French barque "Marshall Daveout," bound from Geelong, Victoria, to Dakar, with a full cargo of grain. She was armed with two 3in. guns for submarines, and was also fitted with



The French sailer "Marechal Daveout," captured on her homeward voyage from Geelong, Victoria. She had 3,500 tons of wheat aboard, which was sent to the bottom with the ship.

wireless. Captain Brett, like a sensible man, did not attempt to use his pop-guns, but surrendered quietly.

The crew and stores, including a live pig, were brought over to the "Wolf," and at 1 p.m. the "Marshall Davout," with her 3500 tons of grain, disappeared below, the usual two bombs being sufficient to give her her knockout.

Captain Brett was rather despondent over the loss of his ship, but was quite confident that the "Wolf" would never reach Germany. Most of us were of the same opinion. Our confidence in the Navy was very strong. Captain Brett was a native of Brittany, where France's best sailors hail from. He was so firmly convinced that the raider would meet her fate before reaching home that he was the most disgusted man on board when we eventually steamed into Kiel.

The following day the "Wolfchen" was again brought on deck, and being assembled, made a flight just before sunset, but evidently saw nothing to report.

We had now twenty different nationalities represented among the prisoners, and considering the manner in which we were all packed together, it reflects great credit on the men that there were so few disputes and quarrels. Of course, there was occasionally a stand-up fight between some couple who could not settle it otherwise, but taken on the whole they behaved splendidly.

Chapter XVIII.

CAPTURE OF THE "STOROBRORE."

Commander Nerger, in his records, makes several caustic remarks about the enmity between the Britishers and the Japs., and goes so far from the truth as to say that on several occasions his crew had to separate us. These are absolute lies. In the first place, the Japs. lived in a separate hold, and used a different deck for exercise; in fact, there was very little chance of talking to the Japs, much less fighting with them. It was only during the last few days of the cruise that we were thrown any way into close contact with them, and I am certain there never was any fighting done, not even a quarrel, excepting perhaps a few heated arguments over "fishing rights" during our stay at Cargados.

Of the few fights that took place I would like to say that they were never provoked by discussons on questions of nationality or the war. For the most part they were between British sailors, and arose from arguments about some ship or port they had visited, or from a dispute concerning their own comfort.

The 19th of December brought the Spaniard back to us. We were then about sixty miles east of Trinidad, and both ships proceeded towards it. It was Nerger's intention to send the "Wolfchen" up at daylight to see if anything was about, and also to ascertain if the island was still uninhabited. During the night, however, all doubts on the latter question were settled. A wireless message was picked up. It was from Vice-Admiral Martinz, of the Brazilian Navy, to the Military Commander of Trinidad. So Brazil had evidently fortified Trinidad, in order to keep raiders from using it as a base.

On receipt of this message both steamers at once turned round and steamed to the eastward, away from the island. The Germans had not anticipated this, and it came rather as a shock to them. However, by 10 a.m. the day following they had recovered, and their plan was now to go south again clear of the limit of the south-east trade winds, and there do the coaling and necessary overhaul. Both ships hauled to the southward at a speed of seven knots.

For three days we continued to the southward, and on the 23rd December both ships stopped. The Captain of the "Wolf" was waiting a chance to get alongside the collier, but at present the swell was much too high, and even in the smoothest of water the "Igotz Mendi" could beat anything I have ever seen for rolling; she was an absolute marvel at it.

Next day there was no steam on the "Wolf's" boilers. The swell, though subsiding gradually, was still enough to keep the Spaniard going like the pendulum of a clock. This was Christmas Eve, the second which the "Wolf" had spent at sea, but to us the first, and we most devoutly hoped, the last.

Scurvy was now beginning to take hold of some of the prisoners, principally among those who had been the longest on board. The doctors, of course, said it was rheumatism, but most of us had seen too much scurvy in our early days at sea in old sailing ships not to know the disease when we saw it.

In these days of sickness among the captives, who were mostly the men from the "Jumna" and the "Wordsworth," the two German doctors that were on the strength of the raider provided the medical attention. Our own two doctors, Majors Strangman and Flood, who were captured with the "Matunga," were never permitted to visit the hospital, nor were their medical services ever utilised. In fact, these officers were confined to a separate part of the ship, and I was only once permitted to come into contact with them during the whole voyage.

Christmas Day spent on board a German raider in the South Atlantic is not exactly the manner in which most of us

had intended to spend it. But nevertheless the Germans did the best they could under the circumstances. We had plenty to eat, and in our mess Commander Nerger sent us along some wine, which, by the way, was loot from the "Marshall Davout," and a cigar each, both being fully appreciated.

During Christmas Day part of the crew were employed taking fresh water in the boats to the "Igotz Mendi" for her boilers, another gang were busy scraping and painting the ship's side along the waterline.

On Boxing Day there was still a lump of a swell coming along at times, but coal had to be got somehow, so at 4 p.m. the "Wolf" steamed alongside the Spaniard and made fast. Numerous heavy rope fenders were hung between the two ships, but these had to be continually replaced. The "Wolf" lay with hardly a movement perceptible, but the collier did all the antics that she knew, and pounded the "Wolf" so heavily that at times it knocked you off your feet, unless you grabbed something or someone hurriedly. Work was immediately started coaling, working both ends of the ships, and continued without stoppage throughout the night and all the next day. But towards late afternoon things began to get serious for the "Wolf." Her plates were all started just at the waterline in the bunkers, and water was coming in at the rate of eight tons per hour, so at 6 p.m. the "Wolf" cast off, and she was listed to port, so as to keep the damaged plates as much above water as possible.

The Spaniard's side in places was like a piece of corrugated iron. It was certainly a lively bout while it lasted. We all pitied those poor women on the "Igotz Mendi." I managed to have about ten minutes' conversation with Major Flood and his wife whilst we lay alongside. Mrs. Flood had always been a very poor sailor, but the "Igotz Mendi" had quite cured her. She could now stand on deck like an old sailor, and bent to the roll in true nautical style.

Both ships now shut down steam again and went on with necessary overhauls to boilers and engines. Stages were slung over the sides of the "Wolf," and she was painted all over outside. Engineers were also at work trying to stop the leaks.

"Mines" told us that if we cared to write a letter he would get it sent over to the "Igotz Mendi," just in case anything happened to the "Wolf" before she reached home.

On the evening of the 30th December, at 6.45 p.m., both ships had got under weigh again, steaming about 5½ knots, as the "Wolf" still had at least one boiler under repairs. The course was set about north by east. The "Wolf" was kept with a list to port, as the damage to the plates on the starboard side had not yet been repaired. Nothing of note happened during the next few days, the ships jogged on in the same direction and the same 5½ knots speed.

The outbreak of scurvy was now increasing; over 20 of the prisoners were suffering from it, and every day was adding more to the list. The stock of medicine was now pretty well exhausted, although the medicine chest of every ship captured was always emptied and brought over to the "Wolf." However, the main thing for the scurvy patients was fresh vegetables, and of these there was a scant stock.

At 10 a.m. on the 4th January a four-masted sailing ship was sighted, but as she was in ballast and had the Norwegian colours painted on her sides, the "Wolf" let her go without boarding her. However, about 1.30 p.m. he changed his mind, and turned round and went full speed after her. I expect he was afraid that she had noticed the seaplane on his deck, and might shortly fall in with a cruiser and report the "Wolf."

The breeze had freshened up in the meantime, and the "Wolf" had a long chase. I think that if the breeze had held good the "Wolf' would never have caught her, but as usual luck favoured her, and at about 3.30 the wind fell away light, giving the "Wolf" a chance to get up to its prey. At 5 p.m. a prize crew was sent on board the sailing ship, which proved to be the "Storobrore," bound to Monte Video in ballast from Beira. The crew of the Norwegian were brought on board just after dark, and work went on boating stores over until 11.30 p.m., when she was sunk in the usual way, by bombs.

That morning the "Wolf" had flown the red ensign of the British mercantile marine, but in the evening she flew

her own naval ensign and pennant. The reason given for sinking this neutral was because she had been purchased from British owners since the outbreak of hostilities.

The position of the "Wolf" at this time was latitude 17 deg. 17 min. south and 26 deg. 27 min. west longitude. Our calculations were only about 15 miles out in the longitude. Our accurate knowledge of the "Wolf's" position was a source of wonder to the Germans, as they had taken all our instruments, books, and charts from us. But they could not hide the sun and the stars, and those were quite good enough for us to tell, within a few degrees, how the "Wolf" was heading. Also, Mr. McKenzie, chief officer of the "Wairuna," had smuggled through a small chart of the world, and on this we pricked off our positions daily. This was the "Wolf's" last piece of maritime destruction, the "Storobrore" being the fourteenth and last ship captured by the now famous raider.

The captain of the Norwegian was berthed with the passengers amidships, and his crew in No. 3 hold with the Japanese. On the evening of the 6th January another attempt was made to get alongside the Spaniard for more bunkers. It was his last chance, as the prospects of being able to lay alongside each other in the North Atlantic at this time of the year were not at all promising. Hence he took the risk before crossing the line. The weather was not at all ideal for the undertaking. There was a heavy swell and rather a bumpy sea on. But it had to be now or never, and we turned in that night praying that the collier would bump in the whole side of our prison.

Coaling was started immediately, and the coal was dumped anywhere; so long as it was on board the "Wolf," that was all they cared about. In the morning the starboard after gun was nearly buried in coal. The ships pounded and punched each other all night and up till 4 p.m. on the 11th. The old leaks were opened afresh, and numerous new ones started, but she now had sufficient coal to take her to Germany, and that was the main thing for them. As soon as the vessels cast off, stages were slung over the starboard side, and all outward

traces of damage covered with paint. At 8.30 p.m. both ships proceeded to the north-north-east. At 9 a.m. the following morning the "Wolf" stopped, presumably more trouble in the engine-room, but at 4 p.m. she went off full speed to the north-west, with the quite evident intention of running across the steamer tracks at right angles during the night. The "Wolf-chen" was dismantled and put down below, and never flew again as long as we were on board.

On the 22nd January, the "Wolf," again under the British red ensign, stopped a four-masted Danish ship in ballast, but allowed her to proceed. The Spaniard was again met on 23rd January, and communicated with. She then left us, going more to the eastward.

During the passage home from Gargados the engine-room staff had been busy, welding, bending and joining copper pipes, which had been looted from the various steamers captured. These were now being fitted throughout the prisoners' quarters, and connected with the deck steam pipes. This was to be our system of steam heating, and it proved a Godsend through the cold icy regions of the North. Steam pipes were also fitted under each torpedo tube, so as to have them ready for use, whatever the temperature might be.

We made our way slowly up the North Atlantic, keeping pretty well in mid-ocean all the way. Only four steamers were sighted between the Equator and Iceland. We met with north-westerly gales, hail and snow.

Chapter XIX.

ON THE ROAD BACK.

On 27th January, the Kaiser's birthday, was to have been celebrated with great ceremony, but the weather fortunately upset their plans. The gale, which started on the previous day, increased to hurricane force on his Germanic Majesty's birthday, with a very high cross sea running. This was the only time I had ever known the "Wolf" to roll, but she certainly made up for the lost time that day. Just as we were about to sit down to breakfast a heavy lurch sent everything crashing off the tables, and our much looked forward to breakfast was no more. Everything was tightly battened down, and this made the atmosphere anything but pleasant for us below.

Forward in the bunkers things were still more unpleasant. The heavy straining of the ship had opened up the damaged plates on the ship's side, and the cold Atlantic waters were doing their utmost to get into the bowels of the ship. At one time I believe it was coming in at the rate of 40 tons per hour, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement. Anyhow, judging by the faces of the Germans, things must have looked pretty serious for them for a time.

Commander Nerger says that during this gale he saw many strained and anxious faces among the prisoners. This is rather funny, as, firstly, he never saw the face of a single prisoner during the hurricane, and secondly, most of us were old sailing ship men, with far and a long way more experience of gales and hurricanes than ever Commander Nerger knew about.

We continued to keep the bad weather with us. As we drew further north, hail and thick, blinding snow accompanied the biting cold wind, and in spite of our steam pipes below it was bitterly cold and damp. The bare steel deck which we had to stand on kept our feet like blocks of ice. The scurvy patients had increased by this time to fifty, and a fresh hospital was screened off down in the 'tween decks. This hospital was in charge of Sergeant Webb, of the A.A.M.C., and no words can express the care and attention which he showed towards his numerous patients. He was assisted in his work by Corporal Grady, of the same Corps, and they were both highly complimented by the German doctors on arrival at Kiel.

In about 60 deg. north and 30 deg. west on the 5th February the "Igotz Mendi" was again with us, but communication between the ships was confined to signalling. Various reports circulated round the "Wolf" after this last meeting with the Spaniard. Some of the Germans said that the "Igotz Mendi' had passed two British cruisers, and anticipating being held up, had got two bombs ready to blow the ship up with, and that the chief officer of the Spaniard had watched his chance and thrown the bombs overboard. Others said that it was a large transport full of American troops, that she had passed close to. Whether there was any truth in either rumour I am not in a position to say, but I notice that Nerger mentions in his book about two cruisers, so I guess it was all fairy tale. It was now evident, in spite of the fact that the Germans said the British blockade only existed on paper, that the "Wolf" was attempting to get through the Denmark Straits, between Iceland and Greenland.

On the morning of the 7th of February we were awakened by the noise of crunching ice along the ship's side. Our deck being just at the waterline, we could hear it very plainly. At 8 a.m., when we went on deck, a thick haze was hanging over the water, and nothing could be seen more than a quarter of a mile off, but that was quite sufficient for most of us; it was so bitterly cold that five minutes on deck was enough.

Within the range of a quarter of a mile there were a few patches of clear water, but for the most part it was nothing but loose ice, some of it from about 12 to 15 feet above the water. I am a "tropical bird," and have no use for ice, except to keep things cool in warm weather, so the beauty of it did not appeal to me in the least, and I made a hasty retreat below to a slightly warmer atmosphere, which, though much denser with tobacco smoke than on deck, was certainly more congenial to me.

The "Wolf" was steaming dead slow, zig-zagging in and out among the ice, and continued on all that day and night. But early the following morning the attempt to penetrate the Straits had to be abandoned.

The previous evening the Captain of the "Hitachi Maru" was missed. The Germans searched everywhere, but no signs of him could be found. Next morning it was known that he had committed suicide by jumping overboard. A letter which he had given to his chief officer, to be opened if anything should happen to him, proved that he had intended to do so. Death must have been instantaneous, I should think, in that ice-cold water. On the 9th February we turned to the eastward along the south of Iceland, and the Germans were put on war watches. For the next few days we continued to the eastward. The weather was fine and clear, but not a sign of British patrol vessels was seen.

The 14th February, daylight showed up the coast of Norway, and the "Wolf" was steering straight for it. After being allowed on deck for one hour, we were ordered below, and this was our last time on deck for over three days. All the prisoners who had been housed amidships were now brought aft, some were lucky enough to get berthed in the two Warrant-Officers' rooms under the poop, but the others were brought down into our quarters, so that there was now not room to swing a mouse, let alone a cat, in.

The stewards who went along for our tea that night said that we were passing a lighthouse about a mile off. On giving a description of the light, the Norwegian captain said it

was the Marstenen Light, so the "Wolf" was well within the three-mile limit. The weather continued fine all along the Norwegian coast, and throughout the rest of the cruise ideal weather prevailed. But that British cruiser which we all prayed so hard for never showed up.

At 1 p.m. on the 17th February we were allowed on deck for one hour. It was a beautiful day, with bright sunshine, but bitterly cold. We were cruising along the Danish coast, just about three miles off. At about 5.30 p.m. that evening the "Wolf" met the first of the German patrol vessels, and signalled her name. The patrol was doubtful of her, believing that the "Wolf" had been lost months before, but on finding that it really was the "Wolf" safely back again, great cheering took place. At 6.30 p.m. the "Wolf's" anchor rattled down on German bottom for the first time in fifteen months, and I guess all hands breathed a tremendous sigh of relief.

The "Wolf" had completed a marvellous cruise, having been 15 months on the high seas, and this would long remain in the minds of the German people.

Chapter XX.

BACK TO KIEL.

We were rather puzzled on the morning after our safe arrival to find all the officers and crew with scowling, discontented faces. We expected to see them all one huge smile. However, it was not long before our "Intelligence Department" found out what was wrong. Orders had been issued that no one was allowed to communicate with their relatives or friends, and no communication was allowed with the shore. This was pretty bad considering that they were all supposed to have been lost long before this.

The "Wolf" was anchored, as nearly as we could make out, somewhere just inside the Little Belt, and was a long way from land. The only vessel at hand was a cruiser, acting as guardship. Shortly after breakfast a submarine came along close past the "Wolf" and gave her "three cheers." Later on the guardship picked up her anchor and steamed round the "Wolf," her crew cheering the returned heroes. Some fresh vegetables were procured from the guardship in exchange for tea and canned crab. The vegetables were given to the scurvy patients. All the rest of the prisoners were stripped and examined for signs of scurvy by the doctors.

On the morning of the 20th February, a torpedo boat from Kiel came alongside. She brought the Naval Attache from Berlin, who had been in command of the raider "Meteor," which was sunk in the North Sea by a British cruiser. He came down to our quarters, and on leaving made the remark that we would find things in Germany different to what we had been told. This put us in rather a quandary, as we did not know whether things would be better or worse than we had anticipated.

Meantime, on deck a brisk trade was going on. The crew of the destroyer were eagerly exchanging cigarettes and tobacco with the prisoners for soap, and the prisoners thought they made fine bargains until they attempted to smoke the so-called tobacco. The smell reminded one of a bushfire. On examination it was found to be made out of ordinary dry leaves from any tree except the tobacco plant. They had evidently harvested the leaves in the autumn, and manufactured them into a tobacco substitute.

On Sunday morning, the 24th of February, just a week after entering German waters, the "Wolf" picked up her anchor and proceeded towards Kiel Harbour. It was now quite evident that she had been waiting for the "Igotz Mendi" to come in, before she made the grand entry into port. However, rumour had it that the Spaniard was ashore somewhere, so the "Wolf" had to make her entry alone.

On nearing Kiel Harbour we were all sent below in order that we should not see the channels in through the mine fields. But as soon as we entered the harbour the sentries absolutely chased us up on deck. We were exhibit number one for that day.

There were fifteen beautiful battleships and battle cruisers besides numerous other fighting craft in Kiel that day, and as the "Wolf" steamed slowly up the line the crews cheered loudly, and the bands played on each ship as we passed.

At 3 p.m. the "Wolf" anchored in the middle of the stream, and a few hundred yards away lay the previous raider "Moewe." All afternoon the "Wolf" was surrounded by all manner of craft, steam launches, motor boats, and rowing boats, in which were the naval and military officials, with their wives and families. We poor prisoners seemed to cause them quite a lot of amusement, especially the Japanese and niggers. Several of the German crew who were given liberty that evening came back the following morning very disgusted with the state of things ashore. They said that they had to come on board to get a decent meal, as there was very little to be had on shore.

Prisoners on board the "Wolf." This picture was taken when the ship lay in Kiel Harbour.

Every man Jack on the "Wolf" was decorated with the Iron Cross. Captain Nerger was given the "Poure le Merite," all the officers the Iron Cross of the First Order, and the crew of the Second Order. We naturally asked if they did not have a Third Order for prisoners of war.

There was one kind of souvenir that I did not secure when in Germany, and that was the "Iron Cross." Many of these were offered to me for twenty marks, but I declined to do business at the price. Many of the stewards of the "Matunga" bought one or two, but I considered them to be dear even at five marks.

It was amusing, too, when these Iron Crosses were being handed out to the crew of the "Wolf." The men simply filed past an officer and the bauble was handed to them in the same way as a tot of rum. When the officers received theirs, however, there was a sort of celebration, and the Admiral came aboard and handed the honor to Nerger and his officers.

During our stay on board the "Wolf" at Kiel numerous young submarine officers came down to our quarters. A great many of them were ex-merchant service men, and they were all very confident that the war would be finished in two months from then. They said nothing could stop the Germans from getting through to Paris now. One day there was a reception on board, and cinematograph pictures were taken of the afterdeck, with the band playing and the prisoners walking about. All the neutrals except the Finns were landed two days after our arrival at Kiel. The Huns said the Finns would be sent to Finland to fight for their country against Russia.

Chapter XXI.

ALL PRISONERS ASHORE.

On the 28th February we were informed that we would leave the "Wolf" at four o'clock the following morning for Karlsruhe Camp. This party was to include army officers, shipmasters, officers and engineers.

The morning of the first of March will long remain in our memories. It was blowing a blizzard, and the decks covered with snow, getting thicker every minute. We first had to carry all our baggage along the deck and put it on board the tender. We were then mustered and counted over the rail like a mob of cattle.

On landing from the tender we had to drag or carry all our trunks and luggage nearly a quarter of a mile through snow and slush to the railway. This meant making six or seven trips to and from the tender in the thick, blinding snow. The route was lined on both sides of the street by soldiers. At 5.30 a.m. we steamed out of Kiel station, wet and cold, but not by any means miserable, as we were all jolly glad to get ashore again, even if we were prisoners. I was lucky enough to get into a second-class compartment, so had a fairly comfortable seat. There were six prisoners in each compartment with an armed soldier. We were not permitted out of the compartment during the whole journey, which occupied 40 hours. We were given a good hot stew at Altona about 11 a.m., and again that evening we had coffee and sandwiches at Gottingen. It had snowed unceasingly all day, and it was only occasionally that any heat was switched on in our compartment.

At 10 p.m. on the 2nd of March we arrived at Karlsruhe, and were marched under a strong guard to what appeared to be an hotel. Here we were put four in each room, and were quite comfortable, only for the fact that we were locked in and unable to see out of the windows, as they were all painted over on the outside.

This hotel was used as a fumigating base. All officers, before going into the prison camp, had to come here, have all their effects fumigated, and have a bath. This latter part was rather amusing, as we were all anticipating a nice bath in this hotel after our long train journey. But we were told that we could not have one until our turn came, and it was said in such a manner as to imply that a bath was a terrible ordeal to go through. For four days we were kept in that room, and then they took all our clothes away and gave us a sort of shirt combination to wear. We were then taken to the bathroom, fitted with four showers, hot and cold, so there we had the time of our lives, and did not in the least want to come out when ordered to do so. We were taken back into the room we had previously occupied, and found that they had not even changed the bedclothes, so had we been covered with vermin on arrival the fumigation and bath would have been wasted, for the vermin would still have waited for us in the bedding.

After six days in this palatial hotel we were marched to the camp. There we were thoroughly searched, person and baggage, all money taken away, and also anything that they considered might help us to escape. My scissors were confiscated, and when I protested the Hun officer said that I might cut the wire with them. A few days later I was in the canteen, and to my astonishment noticed that the scissors were there for sale. On inquiring the price, I was informed that I might have them for five marks. We were also charged eighteen marks for our food and baggage on the journey from Kiel. The camp at Karlsruhe is situated almost in the centre of the town: in pre-war days I should think it had been a playground of some kind. It was sur-

rounded in the first place by a high barbed wire fence, then a wooden fence about ten feet high surmounted by more barbed wire, and six feet inside the wooden fence there was yet another barbed wire fence. Inside were nine wooden huts, or barracks, as the Germans called them. One of these was used by the Kommandant and various camp officials, one for a dining-room for the prisoners, and off this were two small rooms for reading and writing. Another barrack was for amusements. The remaining huts were living quarters, and were divided off into rooms, the largest accommodating eight

Officers' internment camp at Karlsruhe. It was here that the officer prisoners from the "Wolf" were first sent after arrival in Germany.

prisoners. Each room had a stove in it, and there was an unlimited supply of coal at this camp. There was plenty of ground for exercise, a thing we appreciated very much after the confined space of the 'Wolf.''

The food supplied by the Germans to officer prisoners of war was anything but plentiful, and badly cooked. It consisted of a jug of coffee substitute for breakfast at 8 a.m., nothing to eat with it, and of course no sugar or milk in it. At noon dinner varied slightly, and consisted of a plate of vegetable soup, and a piece of rye bread. The variation was

that twice a week, if you were lucky, you managed to find a small piece of meat in the soup. Tea at 6 p.m. was either the soup left over from dinner or a few potatoes in their jackets. Of course, we might have lived on this, but it certainly did not appease one's hunger. Had it not been for the generosity and kindness of the naval and military officers who were in receipt of parcels from home, we should have fared pretty badly.

We had two muster rolls per day, one at 9.45 a.m. and the other at 8.45 p.m. All lights were out at 9 p.m., but we could walk about till 11 p.m.

During our stay at Karlsruhe several alarms for air-raids were sounded, and immediately all traffic in the streets was stopped until later the "all clear" whistle was sounded. Unfortunately, nothing came over Karlsruhe. Our air squadrons were paying marked attention to Mannheim at that time. German flying machines were continually flying over our camp, doing all sorts of stunts. Some days after our arrival a few more prisoners from the "Wolf" arrived. Sixty of them had been landed on arrival at Kiel, and taken to hospital suffering from scurvy, but a few weeks of fresh food had put them all right again.

Chapter XXII.

ON TO HEIDELBERG.

On the 19th of March a batch of 30 officers was sent from Karlsruhe to Heidelberg, and I was one of them. We travelled to Heidelberg in a first-class compartment, and on arrival there marched out to the camp, which was situated about two miles from the station, and well outside the town limits. Here we were again thoroughly searched, and all our civilian clothes taken from us.

Heidelberg Camp had, besides the usual wooden barracks, two large stone buildings. The larger of the two was for prisoners' accommodation, and very comfortable quarters they were. The other contained on the ground floor a dining hall and kitchen, also the wet and dry canteens. The first floor had another kitchen, and a large billiard-room with two English and two French billiard tables, and numerous card tables. I had not the luck to get berthed in the main building, but was quite comfortable in the huts, being lucky to get into a small room with a very quiet, studious army officer. Here, again, the British officers were exceedingly good to us; food and tobacco were given to us liberally, and I made many good friends whilst in this laager, and was quite content to remain in this camp for the remainder of my captivity.

The evening after my arrival at Heidelberg the British officers gave a pantomime production of "Sinbad the Sailor." It was without a doubt an excellent production. The whole thing, music included, had been written by officers in the camp. It went with a swing from start to finish, most of the airs being very catchy, and the "girls" were splendidly got

up and very fetching, especially the three Bagdad beauties. This was one of many excellent plays I had the pleasure of seeing here. The French officers vied with the British, and the competition was very close.

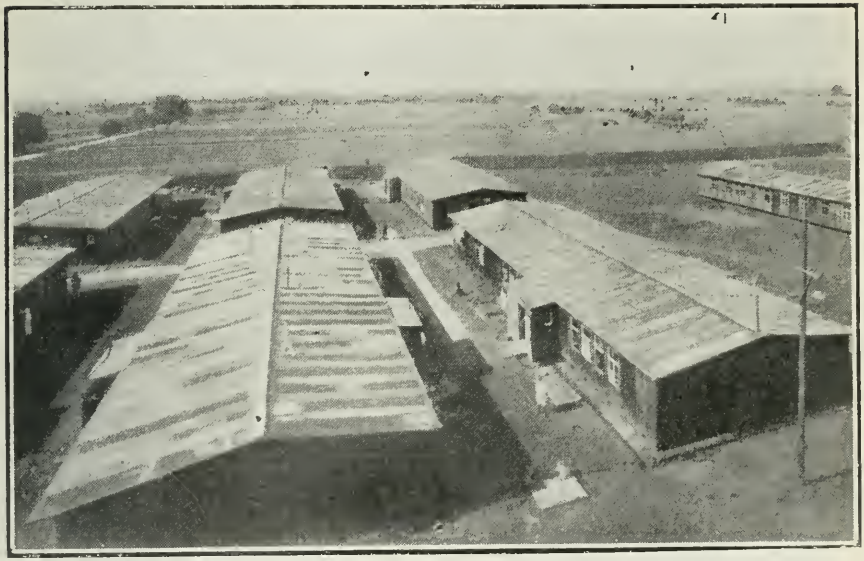
There was a splendid orchestra composed of the officers. It consisted of nine violins, two 'cellos, cornet, trombone, piano and drum. Their rendering of some very difficult pieces was excellent, and would have taken the shine out of many London orchestras.

At Heidelberg the roll-call hours were 10.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. All prisoners had to be in their own rooms at 9.30 p.m., and lights out at 10 p.m. The guards made two rounds, one at 10 p.m. to see that everyone was in bed, and again at 5

Officers' huts at Heidelberg lager. About 700 officers of varied nationalities were interned here, and it was here the best conditions were met with.

a.m. to see that no one had escaped during the night. The usual routine here was as follows:—Rise at 7.30 a.m., and go over to the bathroom for a shower; then shave and dress; go to the cookhouse, and endeavour to get a vacant hole on the stove to cook breakfast on. There were some amusing happenings in the cookhouse, and language at times was not fit for the drawing-room. A man would be diligently kneel-

ing down toasting bread at the front of the stove, and someone's pot of either porridge, coffee or cocoa would suddenly boil over. The owner of the pot would hurriedly grab his pot, and generally manage to spill a good portion of the contents down the neck of the unfortunate toaster. There were generally twice as many men in the cookhouse as there were holes in the stoves, and a pot was no sooner lifted off than a dozen were trying to get the vacant place.



Heidelberg Offizier, Gefangenenlager. This picture shows the main building. In pre-war days it was a training camp for non-commissioned officers for the German Army.

Numerous nationalities were represented: English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Australians, Canadians, French, Belgian, and a few Servians. To hear a Scot with a broad accent trying, in a mixture of broad Scotch and French, to make a French orderly understand what he wanted was indeed very funny.

After breakfast came the "Appell," or roll-call. Then if you were lucky enough to have a court, you had a game of tennis, or a game of billiards: if neither of these were avail-

able, an hour's walk around the camp was the usual thing. Then lunch, which was usually composed partly of Boche food and partly of your own.

A smoke and a yarn brought it up to time to boil water for afternoon tea, provided you had any. After this you strolled over to the billiard-room to read the latest war news, which was posted on the board about this time.

It was then time again, if you were "Peggy" for the mess, to squeeze into the cookhouse and try to grab a hole on the stove to cook dinner on. After dinner a stroll, billiards, or bridge was the order until 9.30 p.m. We were allowed to go out for a walk on parole twice a week, forty officers being allowed out at a time. Some of the walks around Heidelberg were very pretty, but very hard going, as they always took us up on the hills. The view from one of the hills overlooking the old town of Heidleberg was really very fine, and well worth the tramp.

Here also Hun flying machines were always flitting about. One day a machine, which had been showing what he could do over the camp, came a cropper into a field adjoining the camp. This was greeted by loud cheers from the prisoners.

Commander Whitfield was senior officer of the camp while I was there. He had commanded the destroyer "Nomad" in the Jutland fight. The "Nomad" was sunk, and Whitfield was picked up by the Germans badly wounded in several places. He was a fine stamp of naval officer, a cheery word and a smile for everyone. He replenished my tobacco pouch on several occasions.

On the 20th April all merchant service men were notified to be ready to leave the camp at 4 p.m. We were going to Fuchberg. None of the officers had ever heard of it, and no one seemed to know exactly where it was. Anyhow we marched out of camp at 4.20 p.m., very sorry to leave such comfortable quarters.

We entrained at 5 p.m., and left for Fuchberg. As usual, we had an armed soldier in each compartment. These soldiers were men who had been wounded at the front, and who were not yet fit to return.

Everyone I met was disgusted with the war, and did not care which way it ended so long as it ended soon. The soldier in our compartment, who was a mere lad, said he was nineteen years of age, and had been on the Roumanian front, in Servia, the Italian front, and lastly on the Western front. The latter front was the one they all dreaded having to return to.

At 9.30 p.m. we arrived at Frankfurt, and were marched out of the station to a Red Cross hut, which had been erected in the street opposite the Carlton Hotel. Here we were served with a jolly good supper, Hamburg steak, potatoes and macaroni. The waiter in full evening dress attended to our wants, and spoke English fluently.

We were then marched back to the station, and left Frankfurt at 12.45 a.m. At 7.30 next morning we arrived at Cassel, and were taken into the station restaurant for breakfast. This consisted of coffee substitute, cheese substitute, meat paste and bread. Here we were served by three waitresses, who were not averse to a little flirtation with the British "gefangeners." We also topped off our breakfast with a cigar. Of course, we had to pay for all these meals ourselves. Although all money was taken from us when travelling from camp to camp, still the German officer in charge, who paid for everything, kept account of what we had, and it was deducted from our accounts at the new camp.

Some of the younger members were quite appreciative of the "glad-eye" of Gretchen, and loudly deplored their lack of the gift of tongues so that they could have declared their feelings. But, then, they could never have arranged an appointment. This puts me in mind of a little picture that was flashed on our astonished gaze when we were travelling back from the Uchter camp to Clausthal. The train was wheezing along slowly, and we were gazing disconsolately out of the windows, when lo! and behold—there, reclining under a hedge was an English Tommy, with each arm around the waist of two young German girls. He appeared so happy in his captivity on that wayside farm that we could not refrain from giving him a hearty cheer.

Chapter XXIII.

ON THE TRACK AGAIN.

About 10 a.m. we arrived at Warburg, and here we were sidetracked until 3 p.m. During that time numerous Red Cross trains came in, chockful of wounded German soldiers, and many of them had their wounds very sparsely bandaged. They all had a very drawn and nervous look in their faces, and had evidently just been back from the front, being unwashed, unshaven, and, like most German soldiers that I have seen here, generally untidy.

Those wounded Germans were in a pitiable plight. Down and out hardly describes their appearance. We had expected that they would have shown some interest in us, but we received scarcely a glance. They were the personification of hopeless misery and blank despair.

After a lot of shunting we were finally attached to the tail end of a freight train with a carriage full of wounded Germans, and off we went on to a typical country line. Six p.m. brought us to Paderborn, where the Germans got off for the hospital. Here, again, we were sidetracked. After the officer had cursed everyone at the station, he went to the telephone, and finally we were converted into a prisoners' special, and buzzed off with an engine all to ourselves.

At Soest about 9.30 p.m. the officer marched us all into the station restaurant, much to the amusement of some and indignation of other good Germans, who, with their wives and families, were enjoying their evening beer. They were ordered out of one end of the room to make way for us prisoners.

Clausthal Offizier Gefangenenlager. It was situated 3000 feet above sea-level, on the top of the Hartz Mountains. The famous Hauptmann Niemeyer was in command here. Niemeyer, it will be remembered, earned a reputation for his bullying and overbearing treatment.

This little scene was a striking demonstration of the power of the militaristic classes in Germany. When the diners were ordered out they went with great promptitude. A few there were that muttered sullen gutteral curses at our unfortunate band, and glared malevolently at us, but the majority hurried forth with astonishing celerity. I have often wondered whether the grumblers had paid for their meal and had been moved off before they finished it.

Here we had supper, having had nothing since breakfast. It consisted of potato salad, meat paste, sandwiches, coffee and beer. It was found that we had come the wrong way, and would have to go back a considerable distance before we could get on the track for Minden. However, after travelling all night again we finally reached Minden at 7 a.m. Here we got out and marched up a couple of streets to where a steam tram was waiting. We boarded this, and buzzed away once again into rural Germany. At 8.30 a.m. we detrained at Uchter, and found our heavy luggage, which had not left Heidelberg until long after we did, but had evidently gone the right way. After making a bargain with a carter to bring our luggage out to camp for three marks a head, we set off on the march to our new abode. It was a good four miles' walk, and a great disappointment at the end of it.

The camp was situated right in the centre of a black, desolate moor, full of bogs, and covered for the most part with heather. It had the most dreary outlook I have ever seen, and probably seemed more so to us, coming from the beautiful country around Heidelberg. It was composed of about 10 wooden huts, each one fenced off from the other by wire-netting and barbed wire, and the whole camp was surrounded by a 12ft. fence of the same materials, not even a wooden fence to shut out the miserable view.

Here we were handed over to the care of non-commissioned officers, there being neither kommandant nor officers in the camp. The only other prisoners were a few British and French Tommies. We found out that this had been a "straf"

camp for Tommies, but was about to be made into an officers' camp. This news was not at all comforting. We were informed that if we attempted to approach any of the wire fences we would be promptly shot.

There were only three or four Tommies here, and we were in a different compound to them. Once or twice we tried to get into conversation with them through the wires to learn something of their experiences, but the sentries were very wary, and chased us off whenever we approached the barriers. Thus we learned nothing of them or the French and Russians cooped up with them.

After being counted and found to correspond to bills of lading, we were taken into one of the huts, and here the head N.C.O., on looking at the list bearing our names, nationalities, etc., saw Australians on the list, and at once ordered all Australians to step forward. He was greatly surprised when my officers and self moved out, as he had quite made up his mind that the Japanese officers were the Australians, and it took some few minutes to impress into him that the Australians were not a coloured race.

"What!" he exclaimed in guttural tones, "these Australians? There must be something wrong here. All the Australians are black." Probably he was from some far-off province, for I found later that many Germans knew as much of our country as we do ourselves. But anyhow his surprise was genuine.

The hut had no division in it, just a bare shed with wooden bunks, roughly built up in the centre, all together, one on top of the other. You had to crawl in at the end of your bunk between two other people. The beds and pillows were thin bagging filled with heather, roots and all, and made anything but a comfortable mattress.

The food at this camp was slow starvation, as our food parcels had not yet succeeded in catching up to us. Owing to shifting round so much, we were entirely dependent on the Hun catering. Coffee substitute for breakfast, nothing to eat

with it, a dirty-looking mess that they called soup for dinner, and a similar mess for tea, accompanied by a loaf of rye bread, one loaf between every eight men. We existed on this menu for eight days. There were no bathrooms, the only water we had to drink was from a pump, situated alongside the latrines, the latter being in a filthy state, and most unsanitary. The water had a peculiar taste, and turned everything brown · even the short spell we had there it turned most of our teeth brown; what it did to our "Little Marys" I cannot imagine. We all thanked heaven that we had been inoculated against typhoid whilst at Heidelberg, for the stench in this place was vile.

I still have unpleasant memories of that synthetic tea that the Germans gave us. I do not think that there is anything else in the world that tastes like it, for it was the vilest decoction I have ever come across. I strongly suspect to this day that it was made of desiccated boot leather, flavored with street sweepings. The coffee also was a mystery mixture, of which the secret is known only to German science, and they are welcome to retain it. I must say that it was not so bad as the tea, for at a pinch we could drink it. Of the substitute cheese I prefer to remain silent. Men with more forceful and extensive vocabularies than I have described and anathematised it millions of times.

On the following evening two German officers arrived, and when they saw our quarters they shook their heads. We asked when the kommandant was coming, as we wished to protest against the conditions of the camp. They told us to write to the kommandant. This we did, and a few days later the kommandant put in his first appearance, and after barking at several of the prisoners because they had no caps to wear, he informed us that the water from the pump was quite good, but not to drink too much of it. If it was good, why was all the water used by the German officials carted up to them from the village of Uchter?

Chapter XXIV.

"NOW FOR CLAUSTHAL LAGER."

On the afternoon of 29th April, we were told to pack up and be ready to walk to the station at 7 a.m. the following morning, as we were being shifted to Clausthal Lager. We were quite bucked up on hearing this, even though we knew that Chausthal was under the same notorious 10th Division as Uchetmoor, still it could not be much worse, and on the other hand it might be a good deal better.

We had a wet tramp to the station and once more boarded the train. During all our travelling through Germany none of the civil population ever showed the slightest sign of enmity towards us. Work girls at the stations would smile at us and give us a friendly wave of the hands.

The thing that we noticed most all over the country was the scarcity of men. The railway porters were all women and boys, the stokers on the engines were girls, also the guards on the freight trains, and on some of the passenger trains. The latter looked quite smart dressed in knickers and tunic, and always had a smile for the gefangeners.

After a cold journey, during which we managed to procure a hot meal (vegetable stew) at Hanover station, we reached the foot of the Hartz Mountains, and were sidetracked there for three hours. Our progress up the mountains was extremely slow, as the gradients at times were fairly steep. The locomotive also was badly in want of repairs; when in motion it was hidden in a cloud of steam, which seemed to escape from every conceivable portion of its anatomy. At 10 p.m. we arrived at Clausthal station and detrained. Then started a most unpleasant tramp to the camp. It was blow-

ing hard and sleeting harder, as we trudged through the mud and slush for forty minutes to the camp, and we anticipated going to bed wet and hungry.

On arrival at the camp, however, we were taken right into the dining hall, where an excellent meal was served, including wine. This was given us by the prisoners already in camp, and although they were not permitted to welcome us in person, they had certainly done so by the spread set before us. During the meal, which, by the way, was our first civilised feed since leaving Heidelberg, we were taken into the music-room in batches of six and thoroughly searched.

Hauptmann Niemeyer.

Having replenished bunkers to our satisfaction, we were taken over the huts, and were soon fast asleep. The main building was, in pre-war time, known as the Peacock Kurhaus and Hotel, and had a most beautiful situation. It was 3000 feet above sea level, and on one side were two lakes, about one hundred yards outside the wire fence. These lakes were backed by a thick pine forest, and made a very pretty picture.

The sight which greeted our eye on turning out next morning was anything but pleasant. May Day, and everything was under a six-inch coating of snow. Some

said it was beautiful, but it did not appeal to me, as I detest snow and cold generally. During the morning we made the acquaintance of our fellow-prisoners; two hundred in this camp, all British, and a healthy looking lot, up to all sorts of devilment. They heaped tobacco on us, a luxury we had not enjoyed for some days, and wanted to hear all about the "Wolf."

The kommandant here was one of the famous "Niemeyer Twins," his brother being in charge of the Holzminden camp, which like Clausthal was under the control of the 10th Army Corps, the head of which, Von Hanish, was noted for the brutal indignities he forced on the Britishers under his charge.

Hauptmann Niemeyer, better known as "Old Harry," was a tyrant of the worst kind. Nothing was too petty for him to use as an excuse to vent his spleen on us. To look at him was generally quite sufficient to earn you three days in the cells, and it was quite a common thing to see from eight to ten officers at a time being marched off to the "jug." Almost everything one did was, according to "Old Harry," "Against the German war law, you know." This expression became quite a stock phrase in the camp.

Niemeyer was a man of peculiar temperament, but he was probably a typical Hun. He had been a commercial traveller in the United States, and could speak English well, but he was overbearing and unreasonable. At one time, as a great concession, he permitted a number of us to buy foils and boxing gloves for purposes of exercise, he receiving his usual commission on the sales. Then he suddenly seized these articles and removed them from the camp, alleging that the foils were weapons of offence, and that the boxing gloves could be used to enable us to easily scale the barbed wire fences. One habit of his was to stop in front of a prisoner and roar out at him: "Don't you do it." The prisoner would mildly inquire: "Do what?" "Escape!" he would bawl. "You were going to try; the sentries have orders to shoot you, so don't do it!"

This was the first camp I had been in where dogs were used. Here every night, at least four of the sentries had a vicious looking brute of a dog attached to the belt by a short lead. No prisoner from Clausthal ever managed to reach the Dutch frontier. The escapes were numerous, but all failed. Some would be out for twelve days, only to be brought back and do a spell in "jug" for their trouble. Tunnelling was tried on two occasions. The first tunnel was started from under one of the huts, and after months of weary labour it was completed. Everything was ready for a general escape, but an Irish orderly gave the show away to "Old Harry," with the result that thirty officers were placed under arrest and tried. One of the prisoners implicated was put in the cells for seven months, three months of which were spent in a cell alongside the pig-sty, only a thin wooden partition between the two.

The second tunnel was started from under the music room, in the main building, and the main foundations of the building had to be cut through in different places. Another three weeks' work would have completed it, but luck was out. "Old Harry's" brother rang up one morning from Holzminden Camp, telling him that 29 British officers had escaped from there the previous night by a tunnel. This, of course, roused "Old Harry's" suspicions, and he immediately had a search made, and found the tunnel. Numerous articles of wearing apparel were found in the tunnel, and these were taken and locked up by the Germans, as evidence against the owners. However, during that night, some smart work on the part of the tunnelling committee retrieved all the evidence. So the Huns are still at a loss to find the diligent burrowers.

One of the most amusing escapes from this camp occurred shortly before my arrival. Two prisoners rigged themselves up to represent "Old Harry" and one of his Lager officers. Where they got the clothes from is still a mystery, but I believe their make-up was splendid. One evening, just at dusk, they walked boldly up to the gate and the sentry let them out without question. Some time later "Harry" himself came

along, and the sentry was a bit puzzled and told him that he had just let him out, or someone very much like him. "Harry" smiled and said, "Oh, that will be my brother from Holzminden," and off he went to his house, expecting to see his brother there. However, as no brother was found, the Lager officer was sent for. He also had seen no signs of the brother from Holzminden, so then the hue and cry was raised.

Another good attempt was made one very wet afternoon. Most days were wet at Clausthal. However, this particular day was worse than most; also it was blowing strong. The escapee, a young flying officer, watched his chance, and when the sentry turned his back to the blast, he skipped across the plot, crawled through the barbed wire into the neutral zone, and clambered up and over the twelve foot high fence, topped with barbed wire, and was gone before the sentry had turned round.

Chapter XXV.

"OLD HARRY" "STRAFES" THE CAMP.

On the morning of June 22, on parading for roll call, we were surprised to find the whole of the camp guard, with their rifles, lined up on the Appel ground. "Old Harry" came along, and mounting the steps, informed us that the camp was to be "strafed," as a reprisal against some camp in England. We were not allowed to play any games, no music or concerts, no walks, and, lastly, we were to have four roll-calls a day, instead of the usual two. He also told us that we had permission to write one extra letter that month, to tell the people in England that we were being "strafed." We unanimously agreed not to send a single line about the "strafe," and this worried "Old Harry." Every day he would ask someone why we did not write to England and tell them. The "strafe" lasted a month, and during that time we never had a dry day; it rained and blew continually. Spanish Grippe paid a visit to the camp at this time, and nearly half the prisoners were down with it. This suited the Huns nicely, and gave them a good excuse for keeping us standing on appel, while they sent the guard, one at a time, round to each room to see if the sick men were in their respective rooms.

At this time we of the mercantile marine were ordered to give up all our clothes to the Huns. We were only allowed to retain one uniform suit. "Old Harry" accused us of supplying civilian clothes to the military officers for escape purposes. He also said, much to our amusement, that he had found a ship's compass on one of the escapees. A ship's compass would be such a handy thing to carry round, especially when it came to climbing barbed wire fences. He evidently

thought it was a sort of first cousin to a pocket compass. All our civilian clothes had been taken from us at Heidelberg camp, and we had not seen them since, so it was impossible for us to have anything suitable for escape purposes.

He also ordered that all new boots arriving in parcels were to have the soles pulled off in order to see that they contained no maps or compasses. Tennis racquets were either split right down the handle or had holes bored through them. All our food was cut and hacked to pieces. If you drew a tin of sausages from the tin room, each sausage would be cut into at least four pieces.

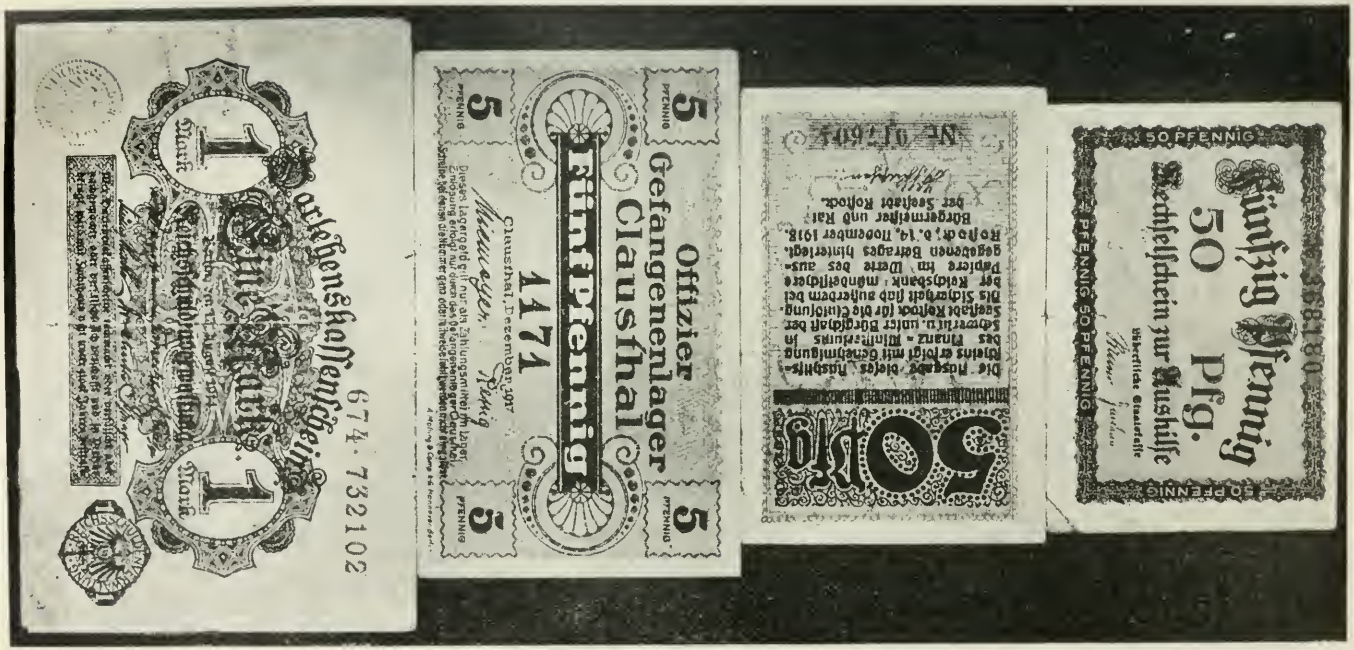
One of "Harry's" worst cases was his treatment of a young R.N.A.S. officer. This officer was caught while attempting to escape, and was taken before "Harry," who ordered him to be stripped. This was carried out by the Hun guard in no gentle fashion, and he was then ordered to kneel before "Harry." Of course he refused, and the guards were ordered to force him to his knees. However, at this point, his fellow escapee, a Cameronian Highlander, took a part in the game, and "Harry" backed down.

There was a system of paper money at the various prison camps, and notes were issued to us in exchange for our own good coin. Each camp had distinct and separate notes of various denominations that could only be used to purchase goods within the confines of the barbed-wire. The crew of the "Matunga" and the other captured vessels fared worse than we did in their own camp. They changed their English money for the German paper currency, a shilling for a mark, and when they were at work in the country, and were earning three and a half marks per day for navvying on the railway, they had no opportunity to spend it. One of my boys told me that the cigarettes on sale were made of dried grass, an egg cost a mark and a half, and a wild hare six marks. I understand that these men had a better time than most of the other prisoners through being in the country. The Japanese were not of these labouring parties, but were sent to work in factories at Hamburg.

The sentries at Clausthal Camp were always fully armed, and some moved about among the prisoners, as well as others being stationed outside. The N.C.Os. were a source of the greatest annoyance to us, however, for they were continually poking their noses into our business, and we never knew the moment one of them would suddenly enter our huts.

One day the interpreter came to me and asked for my diary, as he had been ordered to censor it. I don't know who had told him about my diary, but I knew that if I refused to give it up, they would search my room and find it, so I handed it over. Next morning on Appel "Old Harry" called me out and mustered all the guard around me, and told them I had called them Huns. I was then taken into the kommandatur. where "Harry" and his satellite, the long lager officer, shouted and yelled at me in German for calling them Huns, alluding to me as "Swinehund." This was too much for me, so I used some rather unparliamentary language, and was marched down to the cells under an armed guard. I got three days for "undue behaviour to the kommandant." A few days after my release I was sent back to the cells for eight days for calling the Germans Huns. However, I managed to get my paints and sketch book smuggled down to me, so passed the time away nicely.

About four days after my second release, the Lager officer stopped me and informed me that I must wear blue pants. I had been wearing a pair of grey flannel pants, with the regulation stripe, for at least a month, having bought them from an army officer, for playing tennis in. And now I must wear them no more. Next morning I donned my blue pants for Appel. After Appel I was ordered to my room, where I found a lager officer, interpreter, and two sentries. They had ordered the other occupants out of the room. I was told to strip, and they searched all my belongings, even hauling my bed to pieces. As nothing was found to incriminate me, they asked for the grey pants and took them away. Next morning I was sent to the cells for three days for being the proud possessor of two pairs of pants.



The first three German notes issued during the war. The top note for 50 pfg. was before the war valued at 5d. in English money. The one showing 5 pfg. would represent about one half-penny in English money. These were solely for prisoners' use, and were of no value outside the camp.

The note at the bottom is for one mark, equal to about tenpence in English money (before the war). Prisoners who desired to exchange English money had to pay as high as one and six for this note, but this made no difference in its purchasing power.

In regard to my diary, I was always in fear and trepidation that I would be detected writing it up. I employed many devices to outwit the inquisitiveness of the Germans, and finally hit upon an original and quite satisfactory scheme. I had several rolls of toilet paper, and on this I scribbled my notes, always carefully re-rolling the parcel when I had finished. When I was searched so thoroughly in my hut on the occasion previously referred to, I was in dread lest my plan should be detected. Several times did the searchers handle the rolls, but they never suspected anything, and putting them down departed in disappointment. All the same it was an anxious moment for me, as had it been discovered Niemeyer would certainly have given me six months.

But I could not keep my notes for the whole of the period of my internment, and I cast about to find some means to smuggle them to England. The first opportunity presented itself when a batch of officers were being sent to Holland to be exchanged. To one I entrusted the first instalment of my precious manuscript, and it reached London safely. At a later date I repeated the same practice and gave a second instalment, and some very valuable photographs to a young Victorian who was in the exchange party. Unfortunately for both of us, he and his friends had just reached Aachen when the arrangements for exchanging prisoners were suddenly declared off. Only three men of that lot managed to get through, but of my friend or my papers and photographs I have never heard since. Whether he is alive I am unable to say, for my inquiries have not discovered any trace of him. This loss meant that I had to re-write much from memory on my return.

Chapter XXVI.

CAMP AMUSEMENTS.

A few days later news came into the camp that a representative of the Netherlands Embassy was on his way to Clausthal. We had been waiting for him for months, having written numerous letters requesting his presence here. The day before he arrived two prisoners were sent off in haste to Holland. One was a young naval doctor, captured in the Jutland fight, who had been kept a prisoner for over two years. The other was the padre.

After investigating thoroughly all the complaints made to him, the Dutch representative said that Clausthal was undoubtedly the worst officers' camp in Germany. After his departure "Old Harry" was a different man. From then onwards no one was sent to the cells unless he attempted to escape. This was a change, as the record for the previous month had been fifty-five cases of officers sent to the "jug."

To pass away the time and make life behind barbed wire bearable, the prisoners had to create their own forms of amusements and invent their own forms of exercise. Permission for all kinds of games had to be obtained from the Kommandant, and as we had to buy all materials and implements for sam from the Huns, and incidentally pay exceedingly stiff prices, "Old Harry" seldom withheld his sanction. He saw to it that he received a fairly good commission from those privileged to supply our wants. We had two excellent tennis-courts, made by ourselves, and members of the Tennis Club could always manage to get a court at least once a week. But as the same four players usually kept together, that meant four courts a week, of one hour's play each. The Tennis Club fee was 30

marks a season, and for this sum balls were supplied. The players who had the first court for the day were expected to roll and mark the courts.

A nice miniature golf links was laid out at Clausthal under the supervision of that well-known crack player, Captain C. K. Hutchison. The longest hole was only about 50 yards; the greens small, with plenty of bunkers to try one's temper. But in spite of this I think that golf was our principal form of outdoor exercise, and many keenly contested competitions, both singles and foursomes, were fought out, and betting at times ran high. Golf was also the bane of the Hun sentries' life, for the balls were continually being knocked into the "neutral zone," where no prisoners were permitted to go. The sentries, who lived in dread of "Old Harry's" wrath, were afraid to kick the balls back to us, in case he might see them. On the other hand, they did not like to lose the chance of perhaps a tin of dripping or jam, which might be given them from the prisoners for returning the balls. In the end, however, their "Little Marys" generally prevailed over their fear of Kommandant Niemeyer, and the rubber spheres came back to us.

We had an Amusement Committee, which, for the small sum of 3 marks per head per month, gave us an excellent return for our money.

Firstly, we had a full brass band of forty instruments, and although most of the prisoners had never played an instrument in their lives before, after a few months, during which we non-musical prisoners had to suffer fearful and awful agonies from their noises in the music room, they blossomed forth into a really fine band, and gave us some excellent concerts. Besides the brass band, we had an orchestra of over twenty instruments, which would put many London orchestras in the shade. No piece was too difficult for them to tackle, and the results were always extremely satisfactory.

To our Dramatic Society too much praise could not be given. The acting was absolutely "top hole," and no trouble was spared to make each play a huge success.

The production of F. W. Sydney's "The Brixton Burglary" was excellently staged and acted, and if reproduced by the same company in London would, I am sure, attract a crowded house. Our famous troupe, "The Chierrots," contained first-class talent, ranging from the classical baritone to the giddy young flapper, and two choice comedians in Lieut. Martin and Hills. The first-named was the funniest comedian I have seen on the stage for some years. Lieut. J. E. Day, who unearthed the "Chierrots," deserves great praise for his selection.

The programmes for these entertainments had to be submitted to the Kommandant for censor, and when approved by "His Mightiness" were, with his permission, sent to the nearest town to be printed. At each entertainment a German officer and an interpreter had to be present. But in spite of these precautions many hits were made at "Old Harry," and generally appreciated by the Hun officers, for most of them hated him almost as much as we did. The costumes for the different plays had to be hired from outside, but all the scenery was made and painted by the prisoners. The advertisement drop curtain was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

Some of the programmes of our entertainments I am cherishing as souvenirs, and those of the pantomime, "Sinbad the Sailor," and the drama, "Captain Bon-bon," recall many happy recollections. At Heidelberg our opportunities for this sort of thing were greater, but even at Clausthal the performances were cheerful. One programme of a concert arranged by the "Chierrots" on October 9th, 1918, was as follows:—

THE CHIERROTS.

PRODUCED BY JULIUS E. DAY

(WHERE FROM???).

CLAUSTHAL, OCTOBER 9th, 1918.

N.B.—The Troupe can be booked by the minute, hour, day, week, month, year, or century—or even till the end of the war.

All applications must be addressed to

A. A. DIDD, Chierrot Manager.

Piano by "Instalments." Tunnelweg Zimmer, Neutral Zone.

PART I.

1. "The Opening Chorus" seven-thirty o'clock, so
   We start off with Bullock's best musical oxo.
2. G. S. Deane sings a song about "Two Eyes of Grey":
   His favourite motto's "Itch Deane," so they say.
3. A duet is sung, "First and Last Love's" the name,
   By Pierrots of Billiards and Almanack fame.
4. The next is a song by a bounding young binger,
   Who's "Going to Grow a Moustache"—'twill be ginger!
5. A quartette by Blackall, Dodd, Roberts and Ely,
   May please you or not, but I think it will, really.
6. Here Martin explains why he's looking so leno;
   With no "Apple Dumplings" he can't have a beano.
7. Dodd sings of a "Watchmann" who's up bright and early.
   He always goes down 'cos his hair is curly.
8. A parody rendered by Blackie, nee Snowy,
   You'll never believe me, but, well, it is Goey.
9. Both Bullock and Dood have a job to be nowski,
   They thump side by side "Spanish Dances" moskowski.
10. Here Cupid appears with his arrows. Ha! Ha!
    Just watch his get-off with "The Girl at the Bar."

10 Minutes Interval.

Carriages: 9.30 p.m.
Escapes: 9.45 p.m.
Appels: 12 to 1 a.m.

During the interval, ices will be served in the barracks. Other refreshment can be had second turning on the left up the corridor.

PART II.

1. Number one of part two is a skit, "The Translator";
   It's written by Clarke, and is quite a first-rater.
2. The troupe tries to dance (you will get some fun from it),
   And sings slopps words about "My Fairy Comet."
3. F. E. Hills (i.e., Ginger, as everyone knows),
   Though there aren't any girls, tells us "How to Propose."
4. Tommy Dodd sings a song that is always expected,
   You'll find it on every programme—"Selected."
5. Blackie sings again, "What a Big Girl now I'm Getting"
   (Is Blackie a girl or a boy? What's the betting?).
6. Here Hartin, no, Mills—"Beg yer Pardon"—that's wrong,
   I mean Martin and Hills, raise their voices in song.
7. "Tom o' Devon," by G. S. Deane, rendered with verve is.
   (G. S., we presume, stands for General Service.)
8. Now Martin disports in "The Silvery Sea,"
   The water's so bracing, he hops like a flea.
9. Ely sings us a song of "A Fat L'il Feller,"
   Whose parents are coloured—one black and one yeller.
10. The programme concludes in appropriate style,
    With a trip by the troupe in "Some Automobile."

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TO THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER IS—

A LEMON.

Chapter XXVII.

HOW THE END CAME.

The Germans by this time saw that their game was up. Their armies were everywhere being driven back, and they had no more men to send to the front. "Old Harry" knew that his day of reckoning was drawing near, and instead of sticking to his guns like a man, turned round and absolutely crawled to us. Finally, a few days after the Armistice was signed, he was seen, early one morning, driving to the station in the parcel cart, in mufti. This was the last we ever saw or heard of him.

About a week after the Armistice we were permitted to leave the camp from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on parole. We were not permitted to enter any of the villages in the neighborhood, but that did not worry us, as a hard frost had set in, and we enjoyed some excellent skating on the numerous lakes which are to be found all over the top of the Hartz Mountains.

On the 9th December we received the good news that we would leave the camp on the 11th for home, via Warnemunde and Copenhagen. We entrained at Clausthal station at 4 p.m. on the 11th December and reached Warnemunde on the 12th at 3 p.m. I embarked on the small Danish steamer "Cimbria," but it was too late to make a start that night, as there were several mine fields to be negotiated.

A few days before a British light cruiser had been blown up on the mines, also a Russian transport with 800 Russian prisoners had shared a similar fate.

On board the "Cimbria" everything possible was done to make us comfortable. There were four charming Danish

nurses to look after any wounded prisoners. They all spoke English fluently, and we monopolised every moment of their spare time, as we had not spoken to a woman for many weary months. We arrived at Copenhagen safely at 3 p.m. on the 13th December, and disembarked with many regrets from the little "Cimbria."

I have never experienced such hospitality as shown us by the Danish people. Every one of them seemed so pleased to see us, and to do everything they possibly could to make our stay in their capital as pleasant as possible, and I am afraid most of the young officers lost their hearts to the beautiful Danish girls, whose complexions are absolutely matchless.

I would like to say a few words in praise of Miss M. E. Chumley, head of the Australian Red Cross organisation in London. This lady, who is a resident of Melbourne, performed wonderful work for the Australian prisoners of war, and if anyone merits a decoration for distinguished and noble services it is Miss Chumley. I can never forget her kindness when we were immured at Clausthal. We frequently wrote to the Red Cross for various articles, and no trouble ever deterred her from obtaining what we desired. Our least request was faithfully attended to, and the assistance we received through this good lady's offices made life endurable to us. On my return to London I called upon Miss Chumley to personally thank her for her great kindness. I found her absolutely run down in health and worn out by her untiring labors, but refusing resolutely to take the rest of which she was so obviously in need. While I was at her office a number of Australian soldiers came in. She met them personally. "Numbers, please, and full names. Yes, here's a letter for you, and you, and you. Now, boys, where are you going for Xmas? What? Nowhere! Now just wait a moment," and she went to the telephone. Various folk having house parties were rung up, and in five minutes the happy soldiers were sent to different English homes to spend a merry Christmas. Miss Chumley appeared to prefer doing things herself than to entrust them to her assistants.

If we did not receive all the parcels sent to us it was not Miss Chumley's fault. As a matter of fact, when we were at Clausthal the percentage of parcels lost up to the time of the armistice was about forty-five, and after that about eighty-five. There is no doubt that "Old Harry" received his share, but the bulk went to an N.C.O. named Nella, who was a sort of quartermaster. This Nella also conducted a general store in the neighbouring village, and when the parcel cart came from the station each day, it halted outside this establishment, and half its contents were generally unloaded. In fact, after the armistice was signed, and we could move about, we discovered that in numerous villages in the neighbourhood proprietors of shops had been supplied with Australian butter, jam, tinned meat, and clothing by Nella's central store. He must have made a substantial fortune out of the parcels looted in this fashion.

On December 16th I embarked on H.M.T. "Plassey," and sailed for Leith, escorted by H.M.S. "Centaur." Crossing the North Sea we passed numerous floating mines, several of which the "Centaur" exploded by gun-fire.

We arrived at Leith on the afternoon of the 19th, and were greeted with the skirl of the bagpipes and school children singing songs and waving flags.

I arrived in London on the morning of the 20th, and was lucky in procuring a berth on H.M.A.T. "Barambah," sailing for Australia on Christmas Eve. On boarding the "Barambah," I found that Germany was still dogging me, for the vessel proved to be the late German-Australian liner "Hobart" So I returned as I was taken away—on a vessel "Made in Germany."

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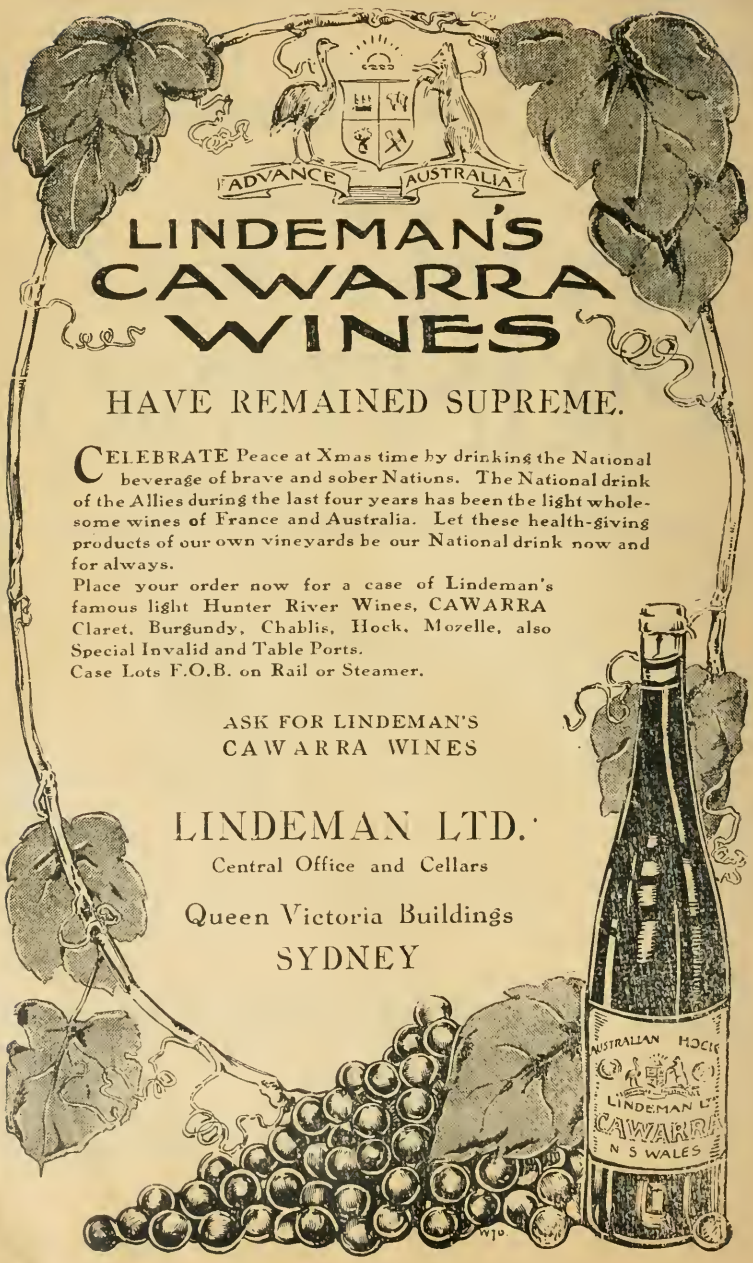

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